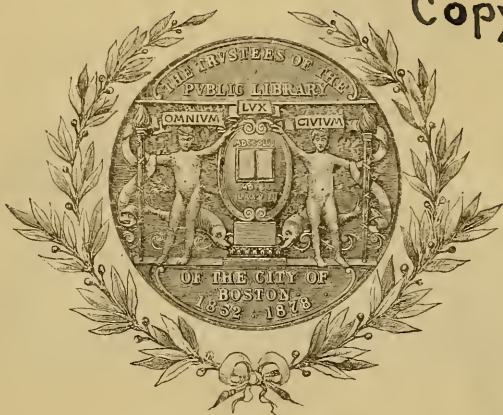


No. <sup>★</sup>F73.5.S52 1930

Copy 4









TERCENTENARY EDITION

11-27-35

# THE BOOK OF BOSTON

*By*

ROBERT SHACKLETON

*Author of "The Book of New York,"  
"Unvisited Places of Old Europe," etc.*

19-25



*Illustrated with Photographs  
and with drawings by R. L. BOYER*

THE PENN PUBLISHING  
COMPANY PHILADELPHIA

1930

SB

★ F73

. 5

B

. S52

1930

Jo 8165

Copy 3

3-1-1934(3)

**COPYRIGHT  
1916 BY  
THE PENN  
PUBLISHING  
COMPANY**



First printing, October, 1916  
Second printing, February, 1917

Good copy

✓

**The Book of Boston**

974.46t  
S 524

# CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I TAKING STOCK OF THE CITY . . . . .	1
II BOSTON COMMON . . . . .	5
III BOSTON PREFERRED . . . . .	20
IV ON THE PRIM, DECOROUS HILL . . . . .	35
V THE CITY OF HOLMES . . . . .	49
VI A HOUSE SET ON A HILL . . . . .	62
VII A PICTURESQUE BOSTONIAN . . . . .	73
VIII A WOMAN'S CITY . . . . .	84
IX THE DISTINCTIVE PARK STREET CORNER . . . . .	99
X TWO FAMOUS OLD BUILDINGS . . . . .	109
XI TO THE OLD STATE HOUSE . . . . .	122
XII FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE . . . . .	133
XIII THE STREETS OF BOSTON . . . . .	148
XIV IN THE OLD NORTH END . . . . .	163
XV DOWN WAPPING STREET AND UP BUNKER HILL	177
XVI THE BACK BAY AND THE STUDENTS' QUARTER .	188
XVII HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT . . . . .	208
XVIII "COLLEGE RED AND COMMON GREEN" . . . . .	223
XIX AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE . . . . .	239
XX A TOWN THAT WASHINGTON WANTED TO SEE .	255
XXI THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM . . . . .	269
XXII THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA . . . . .	285
XXIII PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN . . . . .	300
XXIV "THE NIGHT SHALL BE FILLED WITH MUSIC" .	319
INDEX . . . . .	327





## ILLUSTRATIONS

The Park Street Church, from the Common . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Doorway of the old house of the Harvard Presidents, Cambridge . . . . .	<i>Title Page Decoration</i>
	PAGE
The Shaw Memorial . . . . . (heading)	1
Fountain on the Common . . . . . (initial)	1
Boston from the Charles . . . . . (tail piece)	4
The Long Path . . . . . (initial)	5
St. Paul's, facing the Common . . . . . (tail piece)	19
A doorway on Beacon Hill . . . . . (initial)	20
Beautiful Mount Vernon Street . . . . . (facing)	22
A Beacon Street mantel of 1818 . . . . . (tail piece)	34
The high-shouldered end of Cedar Street . . . . . (initial)	35
Looking down old Pinckney Street . . . . . (facing)	44
Thomas Bailey Aldrich's doorway . . . . . (tail piece)	48
Quaint steps at end of Bosworth Street . . . . . (initial)	49
The doorway of Prescott's home on Beacon Hill . . . . . (facing)	52
The Sunny Street that holds the Sifted Few . . . . . (tail piece)	61
Iron gateway at the State House . . . . . (initial)	62
The Bostonian Hub of the Universe . . . . . (facing)	66
Looking across the Public Garden . . . . . (tail piece)	72
The Mall, across from Hancock's house . . . . . (initial)	73
John Hancock's sofa . . . . . (tail piece)	83
Entrance to the Women's City Club . . . . . (initial)	84
A spiral stairway, by Bulfinch, on Beacon Hill . . . . . (facing)	92

# ILLUSTRATIONS

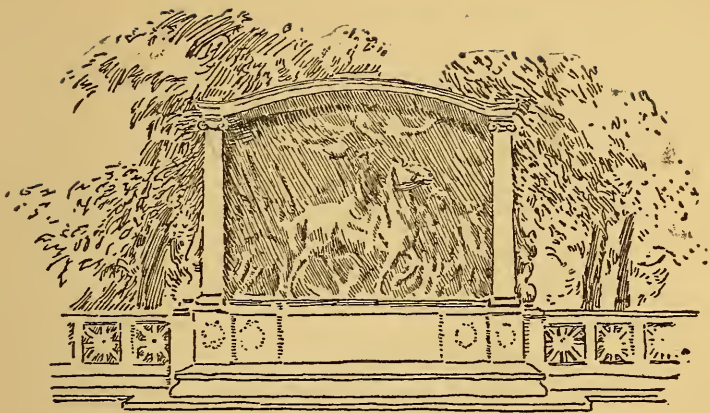
	PAGE
The Museum of Fine Arts, from the Fenway . . . . .	(tail piece) 98
The gate of the Granary Burying-Ground . . . . .	(initial) 99
Tremont Street along the Common . . . . .	(tail piece) 108
Old King's Chapel . . . . .	(initial) 109
Statue of Franklin at the City Hall . . . . .	(tail piece) 121
A narrow byway . . . . .	(initial) 122
The Old State House . . . . .	(tail piece) 132
Old India Wharf . . . . .	(initial) 133
Faneuil Hall and Quincy Market . . . . .	(facing) 134
T Wharf . . . . .	(tail piece) 147
Bridge on the Fenway . . . . .	(initial) 148
On Commonwealth Avenue . . . . .	(tail piece) 162
Old North Church . . . . .	(initial) 163
Interior of the Paul Revere house . . . . .	(tail piece) 176
Bunker Hill Monument . . . . .	(initial) 177
"Old Ironsides" . . . . .	(facing) 178
Where the British landed: the Navy Yard, Charlestown . . . . .	(tail piece) 187
The Boston Library . . . . .	(initial) 188
A Venetian palace in the Fenlands . . . . .	(facing) 202
Cloistered courtyard of Boston Library . . . . .	(tail piece) 207
Statue of Washington in Public Garden . . . . .	(initial) 208
Knox's cannon, on Cambridge Common . . . . .	(tail piece) 222
The Washington Elm, Cambridge . . . . .	(initial) 223
The Main Gateway of Harvard . . . . .	(facing) 230
At the Arnold Arboretum . . . . .	(tail piece) 238
Birthplace of two Presidents, Quincy . . . . .	(initial) 239
The Fairbanks house, Dedham; probably the oldest in New England . . . . .	(facing) 242
Church at Quincy . . . . .	(tail piece) 254
Stairway in the Lee mansion, Marblehead . . . . .	(initial) 255

# ILLUSTRATIONS

	PAGE
The harbor of Marblehead . . . . . (facing)	264
The old Cradock house on the Mystic . (tail piece)	268
A Salem doorway . . . . . (initial)	269
Romantic Chestnut Street, in Salem . . (facing)	276
Hawthorne's birthplace, Salem . . . (tail piece)	284
The Old Manse, Concord . . . . . (initial)	285
"Here Once the Embattled Farmers Stood": Concord	
. . . . . (facing)	294
Emerson's library . . . . . (tail piece)	299
The Alden house, at Duxbury . . . . (initial)	300
Plymouth, from the Graveyard on the Hill (facing)	306
Sand dunes of Provincetown . . . . . (tail piece)	318
Along Charlesbank . . . . . (initial)	319
Old Louisburg Square . . . . . (facing)	322
A Club hallway . . . . . (tail piece)	325








# THE BOOK OF BOSTON

## CHAPTER I

### TAKING STOCK OF THE CITY



I SHALL write of Boston. I shall write of the Boston of to-day; of what Boston has retained, and what it has become and what it has builded; and I shall write, to use the quaint old Shakespearean phrase, of the memorials and the works of art that do adorn the city. I shall write of the Boston to which thousands of Americans annually pilgrimage. And if, in writing of the Boston of to-day, there is mention of the past, it will be because in certain aspects, in certain phases, the past and the present are inextricably blended. Boston is dear to the hearts of Americans.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

A city of interest, this: a city with much of charm, with much of beauty, with much of dignity. A city of idols as well as of ideals, and with some of the idols clay. For, indeed, it is a very human city, with pleasantly piquant peculiarities. On the whole, in its development, a comfortable city. A city of traditions that are fine and traditions that are not so fine. A city of beliefs and at the same time of prejudices. A city rich in associations, rich in its memories of great men and great deeds, rich in its possession of places connected with those men and deeds. No other American city so richly and delightfully summons up remembrance of things past.

I shall write of the people as well as of their city, and of their character and peculiarities and ways. Boston, with its prosperous present and its fine, free relish of a history that is like romance, is a likable city, a pleasing city, a city to win the heart.

And it still has the aspect of an American city. Hosts of foreigners have come in, but something in the spirit of the place tends finely to assimilation. Some portions of the city are altogether foreign, but on the whole the American atmosphere has persisted. There is constantly the impression that Americans are still the dominant and permeative force, and one comes to realize that by their influence, and by a splendid system of day schools and night schools, they are steadily making Americans of foreigners and even more so of the children of foreigners. The early Bostonians, by means of the forces of a thoughtful civilization, and constantly by earnest work and pro-

## TAKING STOCK OF THE CITY

found sacrifices, expended their energies in fitting their country for the citizens of the future. The Bostonians of to-day find it necessary to fit those citizens for our country!

Boston is a mature city, a mellow city, a city of experience and experiences, a city of amenities, a city of age. Never was there a greater fallacy than the still-continuing one that ours is a new country! It is generations since this was true. When one remembers that the Pilgrims came three centuries ago, and that the Bostonian settlers closely followed them, it is strange that there should still be an impression that this means youth. Clearly, undoubtedly, the city of Boston is old. If one should say that it is not old because it is younger than London, then neither is London old because it is younger than Rome. Age is necessarily a relative term, and three centuries of vivid, earnest, eager, glowing life give age to Boston.

Yet it is not merely because of its age that Boston holds one. A city, like a building or like a person, must have much more than mere age to arouse interest. A city must have charm or beauty or grace, or brave associations with a long-past time; and Boston, with the soft twilight into which its more distant history vaguely merges and with its possessions of beauty and delightfulness and dignity, assuredly possesses these requisites. History and buildings, great achievements, picturesque events—Boston may point to them all.

But I shall not attempt to tell everything, or even every important thing, in Boston's present or Bos-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

ton's past. He who writes of Boston must, from necessities of time and space, leave much untold and undescribed; but in selecting what seem the essential and most notable features one ought, at least, to present the piquant city in a fair and rounded way.

And Boston ought not to be considered in a narrow geographical sense. To write properly of Boston is to write also of the neighboring towns that have come to be associated with her in common acceptance and common thought; the places over which the mantle of Boston has been flung and which stand hand in hand with her in the light of tradition and history.





## CHAPTER II

### BOSTON COMMON



**B**OSTON COMMON has given to Boston individuality. Standing practically untouched and unbroken, in the very heart of the city, it represents the permanence of ideals. And it has always represented liberty, breadth, uniqueness of standpoint. One gathers the impression that the people of Boston will retain their liberty so long as they retain their Common, and will sink into commonplaceness only if they give up their Common. It is, in a double sense, a Common heritage.

Utilitarianism would long ago have taken this great central space to make way for the natural development of business; this great opening, in the ordinary course of city growth, would long ago have been cut by streets and covered with buildings. But Boston has held loyally to her ideals: she has held the Common; from the first, she seems to have had a subconscious sense of its indispensability to her.

One might begin, in writing of the Common, with naming the streets that bound it, and setting down the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

precise area—which, by the way, is not far from fifty acres—but the vital fact about it is that for almost three hundred years, almost from the beginning of Boston, the Common has been a common in fact as well as in name, held for public use throughout these centuries. No street has ever been put through it; no street car line has been allowed to cross. To some extent the subway has been permitted to burrow beneath, but that has itself been for public use without affecting the surface. The long-ago law of 1640 declared that “There shall be no land granted either for houseplott or garden, out of ye open ground or common field,” and this inhibition, broadly interpreted for the Common preservation, has held through the centuries. In 1646—how long, long ago!—a law was passed, further to strengthen the matter, declaring that the Common should forever be held unbroken until a vote of the majority of the people should permit it to be sliced or cut; and this very year in which I write, the people, on account of this ancient law, voted on a proposition to reduce the Common in order to widen bordering streets, and by a big majority voted it down.

The ordinary American impression of a common is of a shadeless and cheerless expanse, a flat, bare space. But Boston Common is crowded thick with old trees, it is light and cheerful and alive with happiness; instead of being flat it is delightfully diversified, and instead of being bare it has, over all of its surface excepting the playground spaces, an excellent covering of grass—and this in spite of the fact

## BOSTON COMMON

that there are no keep-off-the-grass prohibitions. The Common is a space to be freely used, but the people love it and do not ruin it with use.

Those whom one ordinarily meets on the Common are of the busy, earnest, clean-cut types. Many of them, one sees at a glance, have grandmothers. All are well-dressed, alert, genially happy—and the fancy persistently comes that the very air of the Common diffuses a comfortable happiness.

Among the pleasantest of the many pleasant associations with the Common is that of Ralph Waldo Emerson and of how, as a small boy, he used to tend his mother's cow here! There is a fine and simple breeziness in the very thought of it. What a picture—the serious, solemn little boy so solemnly and seriously doing his part to aid his widowed mother in the time of her straitened fortunes! I think it much more than a mere fancy that the influences of that time had much to do with making Emerson a patient and practical and kindly philosopher instead of merely a cold and theoretical one. And I associate with those early days a tale of his later years, a tale of his coming somewhere upon a young man who was vainly struggling to get a mild but exasperating calf through a gate: pushing would not do, pulling would not do, and, “Oh, don't beat her!” said a gentle voice, and the by-that-time famous Emerson tucked a finger into the corner of the calf's mouth and the little beast trotted quietly along, sucking hard! I think that Emerson, personally lovable man that he was, owed to his experience with the cow on the Common

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

the possession of so great a share of the milk of human kindness, and to his living for a time at the very edge of the Common much of his open outlook on life. And there comes to mind a letter in which some one mentioned his writing, as a boy, a scholarly composition on the stars, because of thoughts that came to him from looking up at the stars from the Common. That is the sort of thing that represents Boston Common. Perhaps "Hitch your wagon to a star!" came to Emerson from the inspiration of those early days.

Cows were freely pastured on the Common until about 1830; and one thinks of the delightful story of Hancock, he of the mighty signature, who, having on hand a banquet for the officers of some French warships, at a time when the friendship of the French meant much to us, and learning that his own cows had not given milk enough, promptly sent out his servants to milk every cow on the Common regardless of ownership! And the very owners of the cows liked him the better for it. And the fact that Hancock's splendid mansion looked out over the Common had, doubtless, much to do with giving him the cheerfully likable qualities that he possessed, in spite of qualities not so likable. For this is such a human Common! You cannot help feeling it every time you cross it or walk beside it or look out over it. It is a place where people are natural, even though you no longer see cows there. And there is a building on fashionable Mount Vernon Street, close by, a low one-story studio building, which not only, though the



## BOSTON COMMON

inhibition is ancient indeed, is kept down to one-story height as an incorporeal hereditament of the houses opposite, which did not wish their view interfered with, but which also possesses, opening upon the street, a broad door which — so you are told, and you have no desire to risk the chances of disapproval by unearthing old documents—must forever remain a broad door so as to let out the cows for the Common!

The Common is not all a level, nor is it all a hill, for it is freely diversified with levels and slopes. It is a pleasantly rolling acreage and possesses even a big pond. And there are a great many trees, in spite of the difficulties that trees face in their fight for existence against city air and smoke, and in spite of the ravages of the gypsy moth, and in spite of serious lopping. The trees still cast a royal shade and give a fine, sweet air to it all.

It is pleasant, too, to notice the system adopted here many years ago, and now in use in some other cities also, of marking carefully the different trees with both their popular and botanic names. For my own part, I remember that it was as a youth, on Boston Common, that I first learned to differentiate the English elm from the American and the linden from the English elm.

One may get somewhat of real beauty on the Common too, as, the glorious yellow and green effect of the great gold dome of the State House seen through and beyond the trees.

The paths, whether of asphalt or earth, are rather shabby, and the Common has nothing of the aspect

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

of gardens or of trimmed lawns. There is an excellent Public Garden just beyond the Common, if that is what one is looking for.

I know of no other open space in America so genially and generally used. And no one, except once in a while for some special event or reason, ever goes to the Common—no one needs to—for it is simply right here at the center of things, and doesn't need going to! It is crossed and passed and looked at in the daily routine of life.

In its complete exclusion of vehicles, the Common is the pedestrian's paradise; and never were there paths that lead on such unexpected tangents. Never were there paths which so puzzlingly start you in apparent good faith for one destination only to make you find yourself most surprisingly headed in another. Yet these perplexing paths are all straight! The uneven and vari-angled sides which make the Common neither round nor oblong nor square nor anything at all, are responsible for leading even the oldest citizen away from his objective if he for a moment forgets what a lifetime of familiarity with these paths has taught him.

Many of the Common walks, as winter approaches, are made to look amusingly like the sidewalks of some village, for interminable lengths of planking, full of slivers and holes, are dragged from their summer's hiding places and laid down here, on crosspieces that raise them a few inches above the level of the walks.

A prettily shaded path is the one known as the

## BOSTON COMMON

Long Path, leading far on under tall and overarching trees from the steps opposite Joy Street to the junction of Boylston and Tremont, and this is the path followed by the Autocrat and the Schoolmistress in the charming love episode that was long ago so charmingly told. One may almost think that the human touch of this pretty romance, with its simple glow of love and life, is the most delightful bit of humanity about the Common, and the fact that it was a love affair of fiction does not make the story the least particle unreal, for every one remembers it as if it was lovemaking of the real and actual kind.

Although the Common has been held immune from homes or streets for these three centuries, a part of it was long ago given over to a graveyard. It is a large graveyard, too, and, although it is directly across from thronged sidewalks and sparkling shops and theaters, it is just as attractively gloomy in appearance as a good old-fashioned graveyard ought to be! Central as it is, and befitting its name of Central Burying-Ground, it has all the interest of aloofness. It is practically hidden, it is almost forgotten and overlooked; and this effect is really remarkable.

One of the many who are buried here was the inventor of a soup that promises to keep his name in perpetual remembrance — of such varied possibilities does Fame make use to hold men's names alive! Many years ago a certain Julien was a cook and a caterer in Boston, an excellent cook and caterer whose finest achieved ambition was the making of a certain soup which so hugely tickled the palates of the elect

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

that by general consent the name of Julien was lovingly attached to it. Well, he deserves his fame, as does any man who adds to the happiness and health of humanity. And here his body lies.

And in this lonely and melancholy cemetery, with the brilliant shops and theaters so incongruously looking out over it, there is buried the artist admittedly honored as the greatest of early American portrait painters; perhaps the greatest, even including the best of modern days; and of course I refer to Gilbert Stuart. This son of a snuff grinder was honored abroad as well as at home, and gave up a triumphant career in England, in the course of which he painted King George the Third and the Prince of Wales, who was to become George the Fourth, in order to satisfy his intense desire to return to America to paint a greater George than either.

It is fitting that he should be buried here in New England's greatest city, for he was New England born, and he lived in Boston throughout the last twenty years or so of his life, and Boston is the proud possessor of his best and finest Washington, one of the only two that he painted direct from his subject (the many others being copies or adaptations by himself or by other artists), and with this George Washington is also Stuart's altogether charming portrait of Martha Washington, the two being painted at the same time. Yet only the other day I noticed, in Boston's best morning newspaper, a brief reference to Gilbert Stuart which twice spelled his name with a "w"! O Tempora!

## BOSTON COMMON

Some years after Stuart's death, it was arranged by some wealthy folk of Rhode Island to take his body back to his native State: for he was born at Narragansett, six miles from Pottawoone and four from Ponanicut, as he once explained to some Englishmen who wondered where a man could possibly be born who spoke English, but said that he was not a native of England or Scotland or Ireland or Wales; but after the preparations had been made it was learned that not only was the grave of Stuart unmarked but that it was unknown; Boston had carelessly mislaid the body of this great American; so the best that could be done was to put a tablet on the outside of the cemetery fence.

Not far from the burying ground is a monument in honor of the men who were killed in what has always been known as the Boston Massacre. And the list of killed is headed by the name of Crispus Attucks, the negro; not that he was more of a martyr than the others, but that this was a chance to set a negro's name first as a sort of defiance, on the part of this abolitionist city of Boston, to any who might deem negroes inferior. And by far the noblest monument in Boston, a monument positively thrilling as well as beautiful, a monument which, though standing unobtrusively, just recessed from the sidewalk, is astonishingly effective in its splendid setting between the two great trees that shade it, is a sculpture by St. Gaudens, which vividly presents, in deep relief, not only the figure of the gallant Colonel Shaw but figures of the negroes who bravely followed him to a



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

brave death. It is a memorial to the spirit, even more than it is a monument to men. This memorial—the most successfully placed monument in America—stands at the highest point of the Common, close to the spot where the War Governor of Massachusetts stood to see Shaw and his regiment march by; and fittingly, here, these soldiers in bronze will forever go marching on.

There is a great deal in a city's devotion to ideals; but only a few evenings ago, in a big Boston theater that was packed to capacity, there were "movie" pictures of the sad Reconstruction days, pictures so utterly unfair in character as to be deplored even by the more earnest sympathizers with the South; and yet, that crowded house applauded tempestuously—the only applause of the evening—the pictures of masked Ku Klux riding down and killing negroes. But I suppose one ought not to forget that Boston must hold descendants of those who tried to mob Garrison, as well as descendants of those who stood for human liberty.

Another of the Common monuments stands on an isolated little hillock, and is to the memory of the soldiers and sailors who died in the Rebellion. It is not much as a work of art; in fact, it is somewhat worse, because more pretentious, than a host of mediocre military memorials set up throughout the country; but the situation is fine, and the inscription is fine, narrating as it does that the city has built the monument with the intent that it shall speak to future generations; and so, one sees that it is an excellent

## BOSTON COMMON

thing to stand here, elm-shaded on its eminence. More and more one feels that across this Common comes blowing the warm breath of a history that is alive.

From the very earliest days the Common was a training ground for soldiers, and this use has not been entirely forgotten. The Bostonians are inclined to resent the fact that their Common was used by the British in the Revolutionary times as a training ground and mustering place for the soldiers who went to Bunker Hill, and before that for the ones who marched to Lexington; it was taking quite a liberty, they still feel; but they find consolation in certain facts of history in regard to what happened to those men.

It is still remembered, too, that a tall young American, standing by, attracted the awed attention of the British soldiers here, for he was over seven feet high; and he remarked to them, carelessly, that when they should get up into the interior of the country they would learn what Americans really were, for out there they looked on him, with his height of only seven feet, as a mere baby.

And once, between the days of Lexington and Bunker Hill, an American stood by and laughed amusedly as a company of British were practising target shooting, which so annoyed their captain that he demanded an explanation, whereupon the American said it amused him to see such bad shooting. "Can you do any better?" said the officer angrily. "Give me a gun," was the laconic reply. And with



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

that the American proceeded to give an astonishing exhibition of center-spot hitting—and the British were to learn, to their cost, over on the hill in Charlestown, that Americans could hit live targets just as readily as they could hit any other kind. (That story of target hitting is curiously like Scott's story of Robin Hood hitting the target at the angry behest of King John! If Scott had been an American he would have found a wealth of material in American annals.)

The broad elm-arched mall along the Beacon Street side of the Common is an odd memento of our second war with England; for money was raised by subscription in 1814 to defend the city against an expected attack, and as the attack was not made and peace was, the money was spent in constructing this mall.

Very early, the Common was used as a place of execution, and in particular it was where Quakers and witches were unanswerably silenced: but in the good old times executions were looked upon in a much more matter-of-course light than they are in modern days. They were really public entertainments in a time when entertainments were few and when the Puritan public frowned on the frivolous.

The mighty Whitefield used to preach on the Common, and it was the main place of refuge for goods and people from the great fire that less than half a century ago devastated the business section.

Flocks of pudgy pigeons now hover about the Common, and it is a pretty sight to see them come circling and whirring, in graceful curves and full trustfulness, to eat the crumbs so freely scattered for

## BOSTON COMMON

them. One need not go to Venice to find a city where citizens and visitors feed the pigeons! Countless gray squirrels dart safely about, and the Common is also a popular place for the airing of that fast-disappearing race, the dog—for dogs are indeed rapidly disappearing, not only on account of city conditions but in particular from the continuous and deadly attacks of the automobile; and so the broad Common, without automobiles as it is, is a rallying place for dog owners and their dogs. They make a sort of last stand here! But never do you hear a man whistle for his dog in Boston; not even on the Common. It simply isn't done! And if a thing isn't done in Boston, you mustn't do it!

The Common has from the first been a place for spectacles of one kind or another; not only such as the drilling of soldiers or the execution of people of unpopular opinions, but many and many other kinds. There comes pleasantly the thought of what a pretty picture it must have presented on that long-ago afternoon, far back before the Revolution, when, under the auspices of a society for the promotion of industry and frugality (the Bostonians have always had a partiality for long titles!), some three hundred demure maidens, "young female spinsters, decently dressed," as the old-time phrasing has it, came out here on the Common with their spinning wheels, and sat here and spun, with busy demureness, prettily playing Priscilla to the admiring John Aldens among the watching throng. What a charming memory it makes for the Common! How one thinks of the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Twelfth Night lines about the "spinsters and knitters in the sun," and the "free maids that weave their threads!"

One notices that the Bostonian of those old days did not consider a spinster as necessarily a female; a city of spinsters would not need to be a city of women; and after all, the word spinster might properly be used as meaning merely spinner. But the explanatory words "decently dressed" would seem to deserve further light: could any young female spinster of pre-Revolutionary days ever have dressed otherwise! The very thought is incredible.

The genial freedom for which the Common stands was well illustrated by a story told me by a Boston lady, of her last meeting with Louisa M. Alcott; for a little niece came running up, exclaiming excitedly, "Oh, Aunt Louisa! I just feel that I want to scream!" Whereupon the creator of "Little Women" most placidly replied, "Very well, dear: just go out on the Common and scream." And that was both wise and illustrative.

Old-time city that it is, Boston has an old-time fancy for observing holidays. Even on the last Columbus Day it seemed as if every store was closed and that every citizen was either at the ball game—some 40,000 were there, with at least half as many more anxious to get in—or else walking on or beside the Common. And when night fell, it seemed as if everybody went to the Common, for there were fireworks given by the city, with lavishness of expense and superbness of effect. Mighty crowds were gathered

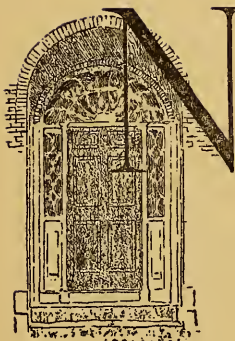
## BOSTON COMMON

and hundreds of motor cars were lined up around the Common's edge, and when, at the close, the American flag was flung to the night in colors of blazing fire, every motor horn honked joyously and every individual joyously cheered. For this was their own Common.



## CHAPTER III

### BOSTON PREFERRED



NATURALLY enough, next to Boston Common comes Boston Preferred! For the term can very well be used in referring to Beacon Hill, which edges and overlooks the Common and is still the finest residence section of the city. And this Boston Preferred, this Beacon Hill, still stands for the exclusiveness, the permanence, the fixity, of Boston society; it stands for the social cohesion of the city.

Beacon Hill is still of very considerable altitude, even though it was long ago lowered, by vigorous cutting-down, from the triple-peaked height that it was originally when it gave Boston its first and grandiose name of Tri-Mountain. The triple-peak disappeared and a single rounded top remained. The State House stands on the present summit of the hill, and the top of its great gold dome is at the same height as was the top of the hill itself originally. The hill is still so steep that in places there are lengths of iron handrails set into and against the



## BOSTON PREFERRED

buildings for the aid of pedestrians in icy weather, and there are notices at the foot of some of the hills to warn vehicles not to attempt them when the slopes are icy but to take some roundabout course instead—with Bostonian attention to detail, the particular course being suggested. And at teas or receptions the waiting motor-cars are likely to be standing with their wheels turned rakishly against the curb for safety. And on the most slippery days the motors and carriages that have dared to venture upon the actual slopes go dangerously, for the horses slip in nervous helplessness, and now and then some motor skids and slides and whirls and either dashes against the curb or slides swift and uncontrolled to the foot of the hill.

And as to the name of the hill, no one need think that beacons are but a picturesque figure of speech in regard to long-past American days, for beacons were a very real and at the same time an extremely romantic feature of early life in this country. Baroness Riedesel, the wife of the Brunswick general captured with Burgoyne, tells that when she was with her captive husband in Cambridge there was an alarm which caused a rising of the entire countryside, that barrels of pitch blazed on the hilltops, and that for some days armed Americans came hurrying in, some of them even without shoes and stockings, but all eager and ready to fight. Historians have so ignored the romantic in America that they have almost succeeded in giving Americans themselves the idea that the romantic never existed here.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Beacon Hill is the part of Boston that is still full of fine old homes. They are not the earliest houses of the city, they are not even pre-Revolutionary, but they are of the fine period following shortly after the Revolution. They are generous, comfortable, well proportioned, dignified houses, with their soft-toned brick and their typical bowed fronts and their general air of spaciousness and geniality—the bows in the fronts being gentle outward swells of the walls from top to bottom of the house, with two windows in each bow, one on each side and none in the middle; something entirely different from most modern bay-windows, of Boston and elsewhere, which are excrescences with three windows. Quite English, old-fashioned English, are the Beacon Hill bow-fronts; very much the kind of fronts that Barrie somewhere describes as bringing to a stop the people driving through a little village.

That this part of Boston is really on a hill is recognized as you climb it; and if, on some of the streets, you sit inside of one of the bowed windows and a man is walking down the hill, you are likely to see him from the waist up as he passes the upper window, and to see only the top of his hat when he passes the lower! But an even better way to realize just how much of a hill this still is, is to look back at it from one of the bridges over the Charles for, from such a viewpoint, this part of the city rises prominent and steep, with its congregated mass of buildings etched dim and dark against the sky, like an old-time engraving darkened and at the same time beautified with



## BOSTON PREFERRED

age. This Beacon Hill is so charming a part of the city as to be supreme among American perched places for delightfulness of homes and city living.

Mount Vernon Street is the finest bit of this fine district. One of the old residents of the street said to me, with more than a touch of pride, that Henry James termed it the only respectable street in America. Well, Henry James liked Mount Vernon Street very much indeed, although he did not write precisely what was quoted to me as being his. What he wrote was that this was the happiest street scene our country could show (perhaps I should remark that the context shows him to use "happy" in the general sense of felicitous), "and as pleasant, on those respectable lines, in a degree not surpassed even among outward pomps." After all, looking at his words again, there need be small wonder that he was misquoted, for who, except a devoted disciple of James, could be expected to understand precisely what this phrasing means! But the general impression is clear, and that is that Henry James, critically conversant as he was with the most beautiful streets of Europe, and idolizing Europe, still had high admiration for beautiful Mount Vernon Street.

The street is one of serenity, and there is a certain benignancy of dignity which seems to make an atmosphere of its own; there is a constant beauty of restraint, and of even a sort of retiring seclusion, even though the houses are built close together. It is indeed a felicitous street, and the more felicitous from a certain crookedness, or at least out-of-straight-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

ness, in its street lines, that comes from quite a number of unexpected and unexplainable little bends, so slight as not at first to be noticed, but which add materially to effectiveness.

But it must not be thought that Mount Vernon Street is the only part of Beacon Hill that is full of charm, for there are other charming streets as well, notably Chestnut Street, rich in old-time atmosphere, and Beacon Street, fronting bravely out over the Common, and that charming Louisburg Square about which all of Beacon Hill may be said to cluster: and it may be mentioned that the Beacon Hillers like to pronounce Louisburg with the "s" sounded.

Louisburg Square is like Gramercy Park in New York, in that the people who own the abutting properties possess certain ownership in it—the central portion being oval and not square, and the entire square being oblong. It is amusing that when the trees in the center are trimmed and lopped the wood is divided into bundles and parcels and evenly distributed for fireplace burning among all of the adjoining property holders.

In any city, even in Europe, Louisburg Square would at once attract attention as a charming little bit. Its central oval is green, tree shaded, with grass within an iron fence, and all about it are fine old houses of old Boston type. It is really a bit of old London, and that this is no mere fancy is shown by the fact that when a country-wide search was made by a moving picture concern which was preparing for an elaborate presentation of Vanity Fair, the search

## BOSTON PREFERRED

resulted in fixing upon this little Louisburg Square, with its shading trees and old-fashioned house-fronts, to represent the Russell Square of London and of Thackeray. A house was chosen—any one of a number might have been chosen—for the Osborne home, and the street sign of “Louisburg Square” was taken down and “Russell Square” was substituted, but no other alteration was needed. I went to see the picture given, and had I not positively known that it was Louisburg Square I should never have doubted that it was really the familiar Russell Square at which I was looking. That the house chosen was Number 20 adds a point of interest, for it is the house in which the wonderful singer, Jenny Lind, was married to her accompanist, Otto Goldschmidt, in the course of that remarkable American tour in which she was given \$175,000 and all of her expenses, while her manager, P. T. Barnum, received as his share \$500,000.

There are two little statues, modestly pedestaled, within the oval of green, one at either end, and each of them is a little smaller than life size. They are so quietly sedate, these smallish marble men, that they seem as if made with particular thought of the sedateness of this smallish square. One of the figures, so one recognizes, is of Columbus, but the other is so unfamiliar, with a face so different from that of any well-known American, that one wonders in vain who it can possibly be—and then it is learned that it is Aristides! One helplessly wonders why Aristides the Just stands here! And the matter seems still

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

stranger when one learns that, so the residents tell you, these two marble monuments were the very first of all the Boston public monuments to individuals.

Something approaching a century ago, so it appears, a Greek merchant settled in Boston and made his home here on Louisburg Square, and he so loved the environment that he had these monuments sent over from Greece and presented them to the city to stand forever here; choosing Columbus as his idea of the man most representative of all America, and Aristides because he personally loved the good old Greek, his own countryman. A story like that does add so much to the charm of a charming place.

This old part of the city, and particularly Louisburg Square, is a gathering place for cats; not homeless cats that furtively creep away, but sleek, sedate, well-fed, lovable and likable cats; cats come here to meet each other or to hunt birds or just to take a stroll. They are of all races, sizes, and colors, from the big, glorious yellow to the shiny-coated jet black. Sometimes only one or two are in sight; at other times there may be several; then, when these wander off, others will wander incidentally in, perhaps only one or two again or perhaps a group. When tired of walking or of hunting or of exchanging compliments with one another they are not unlikely to rest comfortably on the bases of the monuments, generally choosing, for some obscure catlike reason, Columbus in preference to Aristides; indeed, a cat on Columbus is a familiar neighborhood sight.

Here on Beacon Hill some of the houses have panes

## BOSTON PREFERRED

of purple glass in their windows, and one learns that this empurpling effect makes the house owners very proud indeed. It seems that quite a quantity of window glass was made which contained some unexpected material, just when some of the best houses hereabouts were building, and that it was used in these houses, and that in course of time and the action of the sunlight, the glass containing the unexpected substance turned purple and that purple it has ever since remained. Just why it should be a matter of special pride to have too much foreign substance in one's window glass it is hard for even the Bostonians to explain, for they realize that the houses are just as old, and would look just as old, without the purple panes; but none the less, to them it represents vitreous connection with a proud and precious past. As a matter of fact, a similar pride used to be felt by the owners of some old-time houses on Clinton Place and Irving Place in New York City, which also possessed purple panes. One wonders if there is some subtle and subconscious connection between the ideas of purple glass and blue blood; at any rate, the owners have all the sense of living in the purple.

Boston goes to sleep early, and Beacon Hill goes even earlier than does the rest of the city. And, the people once in bed, it takes a good deal to rouse them. At a few minutes before eleven one night I was walking down Mount Vernon Street, with the houses all blank and black, when I saw an automobile fire-engine and hook-and-ladder start climbing up the hill. Never have I heard so terrific a street noise. For the



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

heavy motors were on low gear, and each moment they were almost stalling, and they were grating, grinding and shrieking as they slowly fought their way, with noises that shattered the very air. One would have thought that every individual on the hill would be aroused. But no! If any house on Beacon Hill must burn, it must be before eleven at night or else neighbors refuse to be interested. Two servants opened a dormer window and looked out—and that was all!

Beacon Hill, the height of exclusiveness, the citadel of aristocracy, all this it has long been, as if its being a hill aided in giving it literal unapproachableness. It still retains its prideful poise, in its outward and visible signs of perfectly cared-for houses and correctness of dress and manners and equipage. But the gradual approach of changes is shown by shy little signs, frightened at their own temerity, that here and there on Beacon Street modestly print the names of this or that publisher, and by other little signs on Pinckney Street which set forth the single word "Rooms."

Some years ago there was something of a migration from this region to the Back Bay, and many wealthy folk of Boston now live over there, but the better families have always looked on the Back Bay as not to be compared with Beacon Hill.

From the first a poorer and, from the standpoint of Beacon Hill, an undesirable, population has swarmed up against the barriers from the north side, the side farthest away from the Common, but for

## BOSTON PREFERRED

generation after generation the barriers have held firm against them, and now there are even signs of redeeming a little of this adjoining district. Just off one of these poorer streets, I noticed a courtyard, Bellingham Court (the old governor's name has an aristocratic sound!), running back for some two hundred feet to a high wall that once was blank, and not only is that wall now thick-covered with ivy, but on either side of the brick-paved courtyard the few modest little houses are flower-bedecked, and green with vines, and brass-knocked. The courtyard is not for vehicles, and down its center are arranged neatly painted boxes of flowers, with brilliant geraniums the most prominent, as a strong note is needed. It is a little sheltered nook where the commonplace has been transformed into loveliness.

Not all of the old houses have old Bostonians living in them, for some new Bostonians are here also, and one of these naïvely said to me that on first moving in she was so disturbed by seeing people stop and look up at her windows that she nervously went from room to room to see if the curtains were wrong, only to find later that her house was attracting attention because it was one of the houses in which Louisa M. Alcott had lived.

The residents of this region, though ultra-particular in some respects, are not afraid to do the unusual. Two dear old ladies of eminently correct family, living in an eminently correct house, keep a dishpan chained to their front doorstep to offer water to dogs and cats! It would take a lifetime to learn just



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

how the people of this city differentiate the things that in themselves simply must not be done, and the things which, no matter how unusual or exceptional or odd, may be done with impunity.

That Beacon Hill, with its long-maintained social prestige, is but a few minutes' walk from the stir and crowds and bustle of the busiest business streets, and that on its crest is the very center of the political activities of Massachusetts, the State House, makes its continued possession of these serried ranks of capable, comfortable, handsome homes the more surprising in these days of constant American change, and that it is so much of a hill as always to have been impracticable for street cars seems to be the great single reason for its being so long left practically unaltered. The absence of street cars also adds very much to the general effect of serenity and peacefulness.

Most of the houses are of brick, unpainted and soft red, agreeably mellowed and toned by the weathering of years. Indeed, the effect of the entire hill is an effect of brick, for not only are the houses brick but the typical ones are, in general, narrowly corniced with dentiled brick, and the brick walls drop down to the universal brick sidewalks of the district. Yet there is no wearisome likeness of design: continually there is the relief of the variant.

The accessories of the hill charmingly befit the homes, and chief among these accessories is the greenery. For there are lines of trees on the streets, and groups or single trees in the square or in some

## BOSTON PREFERRED

of the gardens behind the homes, and here and there is a mighty spreading elm, and here and there is a flowering ailanthus, and in every direction, on the fronts or the sides of the houses, one sees wistarias in coils or convolutions or sinuous lengths, and some of the vines are of giant thickness, and some clamber over the iron balconies, twisting and crushing and knotting themselves python-like around the rails; and one sees, too, the Boston ivy, the ampelopsis, sweetly massing its rich green against the soft red of brick. Innumerable window-boxes give color and fragrance and English-like touches of beauty. And on one of these streets I noticed a mighty, ancient rose vine, almost a ruin, which has annually spread its flowers there for decades. And all of this in the very heart of this old city!

And one of the most prominent of the large old houses, a mansion in very truth—the old-time rule in New England being that a mansion was a house with a servants' stair, but using the word here in its usual sense of meaning a large and stately home—has behind it, terraced above a side street, a high-set and level garden, with a garden-house of diamond-paned windows; a garden rather melancholy now but so romantically high perched as to have all the effect of what the ancients meant by “hanging garden.”

That on all of these streets the houses are of varying widths adds immensely to the general picturesque effect; in fact, the streets which show the greatest variety in width of houses are the most picturesque. None of the streets is what a Western man would

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

call broad, and some are really narrow, the narrowest of all being little Acorn Street, so slender that you may shake hands across its width. An attractive little street, this, with its line of neat little houses and its brave array of prettily framed doorways and polished brass knockers; the houses being on one side only of the narrow way, facing the high walls, trellised on top and green with vines, of the gardens of Mount Vernon Street homes.

Several of the streets of the hill climb straight and steep from the waters of the Back Bay, and there are positively beautiful views looking down the vistaed narrowness and out across the surface of the water. Stand well up on the steepness of Pinckney Street, and look down at the water sparkling under a sky of Italian blue, and across the sweeping stretch to the white classic temples gleaming in the sun on the farther edge of the Charles (and they look like temples, although in fact they are new buildings of the School of Technology), and you will see how striking and beautiful a city view may be. Or, stand well up on the steep of Mount Vernon Street in the late afternoon of an early autumn day, when the golden sun transmutes the water of the Charles into gold, and scatters showers of gold through the branches of the trees, and flings the gold in splotches and streaks and shimmerings on the pavement, and all is a glorious golden glamour, and again you will realize how beautiful a view it is possible for a city to offer.

Beacon Hill is so delightfully mellow! And this mellowness of aspect comes not only from the fine-

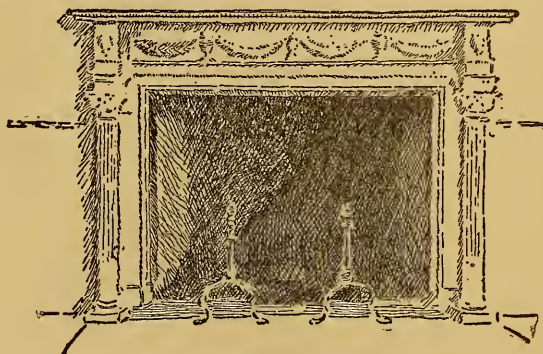
## BOSTON PREFERRED

ness of the old houses in their age-weathering of brick, but also from such things as the old iron balconies that hang in front of the drawing-room windows (all this part of old Boston having its drawing-rooms one flight up so that the people, following the English tradition, may "go down to dinner"), and the brass knockers, and the doorknobs of brass or old glass, and the old frames of iron, leaded into brick or stone, like those of old Paris that used to hold the ancient lanterns that roused the *à la lanterne* cry so terrible to the French aristocrats, and the old iron rails, with little brass urns on their posts, on the tops of big-stoned walls, and the fat cast-iron pineapples, ancient emblems of hospitality, and the good old foot-scrapers, of fine dignity in spite of their lowly use; and one cannot pass along any of these old streets without seeing at windows, as if turning a cold shoulder to the present day, fascinating chair-backs of Chippendale or Sheraton, or even of the rare Jacobean.

On Beacon Hill one is always anticipating the unusual. And one evening, just as dusk was softly creeping over Louisburg Square, strains of music softly sounded, with a sort of gentle pathos, and there came quiveringly the old-fashioned "When we think of the days that are gone, Maggie." It was played so very, very slowly, so very, very sweetly, by two quite oldish men, both of them American, that window after window softly opened and women looked out, and home-going men paused in mounting their door-steps, and a tenser silence, except for the quivering

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

notes, fell over the twilight square, and all intently listened, all were moved. The two players, so unexpectedly American instead of German or Italian, seemed strange memories of the past, tremulously playing here their old-fashioned music in front of these old-fashioned houses that were, themselves, softly dimming like memories in the twilight.





## CHAPTER IV

### ON THE PRIM, DECOROUS HILL



THE streets of Boston are peopled with shadows of the past; shadows of those connected with the historical or literary Boston that has gone. Nor are all the figures Bostonians. Here is Dickens, after a long winter day's tramp out into the country with James T. Fields, hilariously swinging back to the city in a wild snow storm; but suddenly, near the junction of the Common and Charles Street, disappearing from view in the swirling snow clouds, only to be discovered on the other side of the road helping to his feet a blind man who had fallen helplessly in a drift. Here is Thackeray driving down Tremont Street to the lecture hall, with his extremely long legs hilariously stuck out of the carriage window in sheer joyfulness that all the tickets for his first lecture had been sold! For it will be remembered that Thackeray came over to give to the Americans all four Georges in return for the one George that we had concluded to do without. Can you imagine the feelings of the sedate Bostonians as they saw the great



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Englishman going to his own lecture in what without exaggeration could be called an informal way!

How full of life, of buoyancy, were those two wonderful Englishmen! How impossible to picture any Boston man so carried away by success unless in a condition to be carried away by the police! But, so far as that is concerned, it is not likely that even Thackeray ever rode through a street of his own England in quite such exuberance of joy.

Dickens liked Boston, and found what he termed a remarkable similarity of tone between this city and Edinburgh. Thackeray liked Boston, and used to say playfully that he always considered it his native city. Both men made Boston their landing-place on coming from England, and this could scarcely be looked upon as chance, or merely that Boston was the terminal point of a steamer line, but it was also, no doubt, because the two chose the city whose reputation in England most appealed to them; for Boston used to be the center of American literary life.

It was in Boston that Thackeray first tasted American oysters; and enormous ones were purposely set before him at the now-vanished Tremont House, adjoining the Old Granary Graveyard, on Tremont Street (with the "e" in "Trem" short if you would be thought a Bostonian!), and he rejected the largest because it looked like the High Priest's servant's ear that Peter cut off, and with difficulty swallowed the smallest, gasping out that he felt as if he had swallowed a baby. I think people were more natural, more frank, more full of spontaneity in those days,

## ON THE PRIM, DECOROUS HILL

less afraid of what other people might think; or at least our distinguished visitors from abroad gave admirable object lessons along that line.

And picture Thackeray—and isn't it a delightful picture!—dashing down the slope of Beacon Street toward the home of the historian Prescott, gleefully waving two volumes of "Esmond" that had just come to him from across the Atlantic and which he was taking to Prescott because Prescott had given him his first dinner in America—picture him thus dashing down Beacon Street and joyously crying out to a friend whom he passed: "This is the very best I can do! I stand by this book, and am willing to leave it when I go as my card!"

The Prescott house is still there, 55 Beacon Street, well down toward the very foot of the hill and facing out over the Common. It is a broad-fronted house, built in balanced symmetry, a house of buff-painted brick with rounded swells, with roof fronted with heavy white balusters, with window trimmings and door pilastered in white, with black iron balcony light and graceful in design; it is a fine-looking house, a house with a distinguished air. And somehow it seems to suggest a portrait of the admirable Prescott himself. It is a house worth seeing on its own account and also because it was there that Thackeray received the inspiration for the sequel to the story which we see him so gleefully carrying, the sequel to "Esmond," for it was in that house that he saw the two swords (now in the possession of the Massachusetts Historical Society) that had been carried by

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

relatives of Prescott in the Revolutionary War, one of them having been gallantly drawn in the service of the King and the other with equal gallantry in the service of America. Here Thackeray pondered the romance in such a situation, and the result was "The Virginians," with one Esmond to fight for the King and the other for Washington.

Over and over one realizes what possibilities of fine romance lie about us here in America. Not merely romance good enough for minor writers, as some would have us believe, but romance good enough for the giants. For Scott made brave use of the brave old story of the Regicide and Hadley, and he took his most beloved of all characters, Rebecca, from Philadelphia and Washington Irving; and Thackeray took his Virginians from Boston and Prescott;—and I might refer to Dickens and "Chuzzlewit" were that not something far different from romance.

Boston could never forgive Dickens; and that he patronizingly wrote, years afterwards, that America had so changed that he could now speak well of it, aggravated rather than mitigated the enormity of his literary offense, which was, not that he had found people in America to criticise, for he had found people to criticise in his own England, but that, judging from "Chuzzlewit," he had found no one to think highly of in America. He had been cordially received by fine gentlemen, cultivated and polished men, who would have been, and some of whom were, received as fine gentlemen in the very finest society in Europe, yet none the less he went home and wrote the

## ON THE PRIM, DECOROUS HILL

book that he had planned in advance to write, following the advice that he had long before put in the mouth of Sam Weller, to be sure to make a book on America so abusive that it would be sure to sell; he had, with amazing baldness, followed the published prejudices of Mrs. Trollope, which he had absorbed before leaving England; he wrote of Americans as ignorant and boastful boors; and of course, in the new portions of our country, there had to be many such. He wrote of America as being nothing but a nation of boors when he well knew us to be a nation possessing not only such men as Hawthorne and Longfellow and Webster and Motley and Prescott and Fields but many a cultured man of business and many a cultured family.

Fields, with whom Dickens loved to take long tramps, lived on Charles Street, at 148, well on the way that the jogging horse-car used to take towards Cambridge. It is now a highly undesirable street, with infinite dirt and noise, and could at no time have been really attractive. And the Fields house was always hopelessly commonplace, a house high-set and bare in a row of houses all high-set and bare, built in an era of architectural bad taste. It is a brick house with brown stone trimmings, and is empty as I write, for Fields long since died and now his widow is dead, and the untenanted house has been drearily splashed, across the narrow sidewalk, from the chronically muddy street; splashed with brown and yellow dabs to more than the tops of the front doors and windows, and remaining drearily uncleaned.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

I sometimes think of Fields as having been Boston's most important literary man. I do not mean as a writer, although he did write one book that has endeared him to a host of readers, but what he really did for literature was as an intelligent and keenly appreciative critic and an inspirer of literary men. He won the devotion of a host of friends; he welcomed distinguished foreign writers and gave them fine impressions of American society and literature; he counseled and inspired American writers and held them up to their best; it was even owing to him and his personal urgency that the "Scarlet Letter" saw the light. He was one of those rare men who could judge of the value of writing without having to wait to see it in print and without waiting to watch its reception by the public. He was an anticipatory critic of insight and judgment. And that he was at the same time a publisher and for years even a magazine editor also, was in every respect fortunate, for he could publish what he thought worth while to the mutual advantage of himself and the authors.

It is to the lasting honor of Fields that, as Whipple wrote of him after a life-long friendship, he had deliberately formed in his mind, from the start, the ideal of a publisher who should profit by men of letters while at the same time men of letters should profit by him, and that he consistently and successfully lived up to this ideal.

In the old days there was a serious effort to make Charles Street a fine home street. Thomas Bailey Aldrich came here for a time from the slope of Bea-



## ON THE PRIM, DECOROUS HILL

con Hill, making his home at 131, and Oliver Wendell Holmes came for a time to a house, since destroyed in the building of a hospital, at 164; but the street early showed its hopeless disadvantages, becoming, as it did long ago, a great teaming thoroughfare circling the foot of Beacon Hill from one part of the city to another.

The advantages of Charles Street are on the water-side; for it is close to the great broadening of the Charles River, which has always offered a beautiful view to the windows looking out over its sunset sweeps of water. Holmes made his home there, not only for the beauty of the water views but because he intensely loved rowing, and here he had precisely the opportunity he wanted, with the additional convenience of keeping his boat at his back door. But the increasing disadvantages of Charles Street outweighed even these advantages of water and view.

The great rooms of the Fields house likewise looked out over the water, and it was deemed such a pleasure and such an honor to be a guest of James T. Fields that in the old days every literary man expected to be given an invitation as a hall-mark of success.

Those were the days when Boston authors were fine gentlemen and when many a Boston fine gentleman was an author. Indeed, there has never been a Grub Street in Boston. Those who look up the homes of authors need not search in the poorer parts of the city but among the homes of the socially exclusive, and the few exceptions are close by in neighborhoods that were once just as exclusive. And this is the



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

case not only in the city but also in those near-by suburbs which are themselves essentially part of Boston, for it was not poor or unattractive or commonplace towns in which Hawthorne and Longfellow and Emerson lived, but places of such fine distinction and beauty as Cambridge and Concord.

In this matter of the fine living of its authors Boston stands almost unique among cities, the only one which has rivaled it being Edinburgh, where the group of writers who were so famous a century ago lived mostly in the best residential section. In no other particular is the resemblance between Edinburgh and Boston so interesting as this.

On Mount Vernon Street, at 59, in the very heart of conservative aristocracy, is the house that was the latest home of Thomas Bailey Aldrich, a real mansion, broad of front, with classic pedimented doorway of white marble with fluted Doric pillars, and with entablatures of marble set between the second and third stories, and with a rounding swell, and a charming iron balcony, and four stone wreaths along the cornice, and four dormer windows above; and in front of the house there is even a generous grass-plot.

Mount Vernon Street, that very citadel and center of the Brahmins, as the exclusive Boston folk of a past generation loved to call themselves, attracted also for a time the most distinguished of all the Boston writers of to-day, Margaret Deland, who lived for a time at 76, in an old house whose front wall has long horizontal sets of windows that were put in for the sake of giving an unusual amount of light and

## ON THE PRIM, DECOROUS HILL

sun to the flower-loving author. On the curbstone near this house is the quaintest old lamppost in Boston, a wrought iron frame set on a slim granite shaft. After her earlier successes Mrs. Deland left this home for one farther down the street, and then moved over to the Back Bay, still keeping up the Boston literary tradition of living among people of wealth. The other day I noticed in Boston's best morning newspaper a portrait of Mrs. Deland, with a review of her latest work, a new Old Chester book, and the review was amusing, because it described her as being a New England woman who writes with remarkable discernment of a New England village, when as a matter of fact she came here from Western Pennsylvania, and her Old Chester is near Pittsburgh. It is the natural tendency of Boston to assume that an excellent thing is of Boston or at least New England origin.

On Mount Vernon Street, 83, is the home of William Ellery Channing, a fine, austere house of dignity befitting the high standing of the man; a house with a low embankment wall, and grass, and a balcony of a design that is like the backs of Chinese Chippendales. His is one of the few homes that show a tablet, and it is the quietest and most unobtrusive of tablets, set as it is in the ironwork of the gatepost. In Boston everybody knows the name of this Channing, and he has been honored with a public monument over beside the Public Garden, and Longfellow wrote a poem to him, and he is remembered as a great figure and as a leader in thought; yet the Channing that those who are not Bostonians most naturally

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

recall is the William Ellery Channing, the relative and namesake of this Channing of Boston, whom Hawthorne so loved and wrote of so lovingly.

On the difficult slope of the next street to steep Mt. Vernon, on Pinckney street, named in honor of that Pinckney who left us the heritage of that upstanding phrase, "Millions for defense but not one cent for tribute," on that Pinckney Street, at 84, is the home where Aldrich, early in his career, wrote his immortal juvenile, the "Story of a Bad Boy." It is a low-set and almost gloomy looking house, for it is without the usual high basement of the vicinity. Still it is a pleasant house after all, and one wonders why friends of Aldrich always referred to it as a "little" house, for it is four windows wide instead of the usual three of its immediate neighbors. The house has a peculiarly ugly over-hanging bay-window, misguidedly set by some would-be improver against what was once the attractive front of the house, and the first impulse is to say to oneself that of course this ugly bay could not have been there in the time of Aldrich; but a lifelong resident of the street told me that she well remembers the time when he lived and wrote here and that he wrote his "Story of a Bad Boy" in this very bay-window!

Farther up the hill on Pinckney Street, at 54, is an attractive house which may really be called smallish; one feels impelled to call it "neat" even in a district of neatness, and except for that quality little of the distinctive is noticed except that it has an eight-paneled front door with the characteristic door-knob

## ON THE PRIM, DECOROUS HILL

of silver-glass. This house has a most amusing connection with literature, for it was here, in July of 1842, that Nathaniel Hawthorne wrote his note to James Freeman Clarke, asking him to perform the marriage ceremony between himself and Sophia Peabody, "though personally a stranger to you," as he expressed it; and the amusing feature was that although Doctor Clarke was told that "it is our mutual desire that you should perform the ceremony" and that a carriage would call for him at half-past eleven o'clock in the forenoon, Hawthorne quite forgot to mention the date on which the expected marriage was to take place! And the note itself was no guide, for it was merely dated "July," without the day! And Hawthorne also quite forgot to mention where he would like the ceremony to be performed! Still, as Hawthorne wrote the street number on his note, it was possible to straighten the matter out in time.

Still farther up and on what has now become the level-top of Pinckney Street, at 20, is one of the houses where the Alcotts lived, a little, very narrow, high-perched building with its main floor reached by queer abrupt steps up to a front door deeply recessed in an almost tunnel-like approach. The house is of dingy brick and has little windows, and is immediately back of the very best of Mount Vernon Street and on a queerly narrowed part of Pinckney Street. And looking off toward the broadened Charles from this highest part of the street there comes an impression as if the hill has dropped suddenly away and the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

classic temple-like structures on the farther side of the water are close to the foot of a precipice.

The work of Bronson Alcott has been absolutely forgotten and his very name would be forgotten were it not that he was the father of Louisa M. Alcott; yet he had some most unusual qualities. He wrote little and lectured much; he was not a success; he was rather tiresome; and yet with his transcendentalism, with his entirely vague thoughts in regard to what we should now call the superman, the uplift, he seems to have been near to something very excellent, very modern.

It was to this house on Pinckney Street that Alcott returned to his hard-pressed family, one cold winter's day, after a lecture tour, with his overcoat stolen and just one single dollar in his pocket! And this reminds me of a story that I long ago heard out in Cleveland from an old resident there who told me that she remembered how, when a girl, Alcott came to lecture, and that as they had heard that he and his family were in actual need of money they actively sold tickets enough to hand him three hundred dollars, whereupon he said, quite beamingly, that in Buffalo he had seen a set of valuable books that he had very much wished for but had been unable to buy, and that now he would go back and get them and take them home with him.

He was an impractical man, yet his friends liked him and smoothed the way for him, and in his later years the Alcott family were delightfully mainstayed by the immense success of the books of his wonderful and universally loved daughter.



## ON THE PRIM, DECOROUS HILL

The house where Bronson Alcott died at the age of almost ninety, in 1888, is also on Beacon Hill; a decorous, mid-block, characteristic Louisburg Square home, at 10, on the southern side of the square; it is a bow-fronted, white-doored house with a vestibule, with finely-paneled white inner door, hospitably showing to the street; it is a broad brick house set on a smooth granite foundation behind a little iron-railed space, with a plump pine-apple looking like a cheese at the terminal of the rail.

His daughter, Louisa M. Alcott, who won the hearts of myriads and gave such unbounded and wholesome pleasure with her "Little Women" and "Little Men," was so ill, in another part of the city, at the time of his death, that she was not told of it, and on the day of his funeral she herself died in the belief that her aged father was still living.

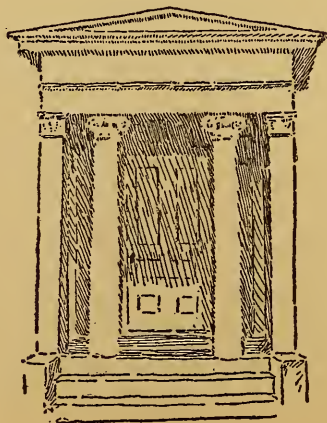
A few doors away, also facing out into the greenery of Louisburg Square, over in its southwest corner, at Number 4, lived for a time William Dean Howells; his once-while home being a comfortable, dormered house of the customary brick, with long drawing-room windows on the second floor, next door to a larger corner house, now a fraternity house, out of and into which young men seem always to be dashing.

Still lower on the slope of Beacon Hill, at 3 West Cedar Street, is a house that was for a time the home of the poet who figured among Longfellow's notables at the Wayside Inn; for those who were pictured as gathering there and telling their tales were all very real men, although some of them were fancifully de-



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

scribed. The poet of the party was a certain Thomas Parsons who was thought of very highly by his famous literary contemporaries, although had it not been for Longfellow he would now be quite forgotten. He made his home for the better part of his best years on Beacon Hill Place, near the State House, but the wide-spreading State House extension has taken street and house, as it has taken many another; but his home for a while was here on West Cedar Street, in a small cozy, plain house in an entire street of similar cozy little houses, all with flowers in window-boxes and box-bushes on the doorsteps, all with brass knockers and old door-knobs and arched doorways. "A poet, too, was there whose verse was tender, musical and terse," as Longfellow expressed it; and it is pleasant to have this house mark a poet's memory, even though the memory is due to the greater poet who wrote about him.



## CHAPTER V

### THE CITY OF HOLMES



**T**HE authors of Boston seem to have been, in an altogether pleasant sense, nomads, even though they kept their nomadic activities within a very limited district. Although there is little in the life of Boston authors which in the ordinary sense could be termed moving, as they were a happy, fortunate, conventional folk, their lives were certainly moving in another sense, for moving is what they spent a great deal of time in doing. Three homes for Aldrich, at least three for Holmes—four, counting the beautiful early home now gone, in Cambridge, and five if the Berkshire home should be included; several different homes in Boston for the Alcotts, who even had three homes out in Concord between times; various homes for Parsons and for Palfrey, three for Motley, two for Parkman—thus the list goes on, and Prescott is almost the only one I think of who did not go moving about, and probably even he did some moving that I have never heard of. Even Mrs. Deland, Bostonian by adoption, has so readily adapted herself to Bos-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

ton's literary way as already to have lived in at least three different Boston homes. It all reminds me of a most interesting little place that I came across in Europe, Neutral Moresnet, where the inhabitants make it almost a point of honor and certainly a point of duty to change their houses once a year.

On Walnut Street, facing down Chestnut, was the boyhood home of Motley, the historian, a house that has since been torn down; the best part of his life was spent in Europe, but he also loved his Boston, and a Chestnut Street house is pointed out, at 16, with a brass-knocker, brass-handled door, with a wonderful fanlight, designed in flowing lines, as a place where he lived for a time.

Chestnut Street is a neighborhood of very felicitous doorways and at 13, well up the slope of the street, is a charming house that was long ago one of the several successional homes of Julia Ward Howe. It has an unusually striking doorway, with four slim, prim white pillars, and is an individual sort of house as if to befit the strikingly individual woman who lived here. No one else, surely, in all literary history ever won acknowledged literary leadership through a long life by one single song plus personality! Mrs. Howe died a few years ago, but when Henry James came over to take his final look at this country to see that it really wasn't worth while and to shake its dust forever from his feet, she was still alive, and the two met at a reception, and a story was told me, by one who heard and witnessed the scene, of what took place at their meeting. Mrs. Howe had known him from

## THE CITY OF HOLMES

his boyhood and he at once began to tell her with effusion of how he had thought and thought of her, so much and so often, while away, and of what a precious delight it now was to meet her again. But she must have had some doubt of his entire sincerity for, looking over her spectacles at him as she used to do when he was a boy, and speaking to him as if he were still a little boy, she melted his sugary pleasantries by saying, with gentle and very slow admonition and with an accented "me," "Don't lie to me, Henry."

Far down at 50 Chestnut Street, in a section where the typical houses have three-part windows as the main windows in their front, is the house where the historian Parkman lived and worked for twenty years. It is a house with exceedingly tall chimneys and a door deeply recessed within an arch, and is almost directly through from the house of the historian Prescott on the next street parallel, Beacon Street. And nothing could be more strange, than that both of these historians, whose homes were so near together, were so grievously troubled with their eyesight as to need specially made appliances, a sort of machine or frame, to enable them to read and write at all; each gave a superb example of working under almost insuperably depressing difficulties; and that they were both historians, both Americans, both of them dwellers on Beacon Hill for many years adds to the strangeness of it.

Out in front of the State House, at the corner of Beacon Street and Park Street, stood the beautiful home of the man who used so to represent Boston in

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

the public eye that it was playfully suggested that the city be called Ticknorville. Here stood the home of George Ticknor. In a sense, the house still stands here, but it has been so altered in fitting it up for business and offices, for antique dealers and decorators and lawyers, that one's first impression is that it has quite vanished and that another building stands in its place. But even yet one-half of the distinguished horseshoe stair still remains, leading up to the front door, and although the fine original door has been replaced by a window, part of the old portico is still in place, surmounted by some exquisite old ironwork which is among the very finest bits of old ironwork in Boston. The marble hall of which Hawthorne writes and in which so many distinguished visitors were received, has gone, and the stairs have been altered and new-banistered, and it is now hard to imagine the old-time glory of the place, although the great height of the ceilings gives an impression of spaciousness and dignity.

For many years Ticknor lived here, pleasantly varying his life with lengthy trips to Europe for travel and study. He had married the daughter of an extremely wealthy merchant, and this made life sufficiently easy for him to spend years and years in producing an agreeable and scholarly history of Spanish literature. Even yet, a Bostonian writing or speaking of the old house and its old-time glory, is likely to refer to it as "her" house, and to mention "her" hospitality and even, incredible though it seems, "her" library! Ticknor must have been a



## THE CITY OF HOLMES

most likable man, for so many likable men liked him so very much indeed, and he was deemed an immensely distinguished man, yet he stands as a striking example of great fame in one generation and practical oblivion in the next.

And how impressively all of those old-time American writers loomed! And how neglected are most of their works to-day! And yet individual remembrance or forgetfulness is not the only test. As a class, or group, they brilliantly made the beginnings of our national literature, they showed that American writers could mark out paths of beauty and learning, they made it clear that American writers could be men of imagination and poetical power. That most of them are now unread is neither discredit nor criticism. In England there has been the same forgetting of men once famous, for of the English authors of the past only a few of the preëminent are read, and the many others who meant so very, very much in their day, are but names and vague memories. But that does not mean, either in England or in America, that the now forgotten writers of the past were not excellent and noteworthy writers, for numbers of them were very excellent and noteworthy indeed, and their combined influence is a powerful and still-continuing force.

It is pleasant to realize that this old section is notable for its connection with other art as well as that of literature; in its architecture it is agreeably distinguished, and it has a pleasant association with the best paintings, for I remember that in looking over a



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

list of those who, a few years ago, were the owners of Gilbert Stuart's works, I noticed that quite a proportion were still in the possession of residents of Beacon Hill; which is just as it ought to be.

Not only is the entire hill, regarding it as a whole, a highly successful example of domestic architecture, whether the houses are considered singly or in mass, but there are individual houses notably worthy of attention. For example, at 85 Mount Vernon Street, is an especially attractive Bulfinch house of a design not usual with that unusual man, and he built it thus differently in order to match an unusually broad frontage of building space and to harmonize with an unusual depth of long and high retaining wall in front. It is a big square-fronted house, one of the largest homes of the entire neighborhood, with its entrance door not on the front of the house at all but on one side, and with its front beautifully balanced with over-arched windows, with separate little balconies, with Corinthian pilasters; and it has a great octagonal lantern on the roof. In addition to all else of dignity and fineness there is the excellent feature of continuing back to the wall of the courtyard, completing a design that is architecturally an adjunct. But the house is now all gray, in one dull monotone, and it is really necessary to picture it in the beauty of its original design of red brick and white pilasters and black iron to see it as it ought to be seen.

Of all the writers who by their combined influence gave the Boston of the past its high literary distinction none was so important as Oliver Wendell

## THE CITY OF HOLMES

Holmes. Not that he need necessarily be considered the greatest among them, although in his particular line he was supreme, but that he so stood for Boston, so represented Boston, so interpreted Boston, so gave the city definite form out of vaguely general imaginings, so placed it before the world, as to make himself its definite exemplar.

Boston is the City of Holmes, and he himself was Boston epitomized. He was in himself a human abridgment of Boston, an abstract of the city that he so loved. He was the best of Boston concentrated into one human form, and he was a writer of whom any city in the world might be proud. To read his "Autocrat" is an intellectual æsthetic delight. Seldom has there been a man so clearsighted, and at the same time so cleverly able to put his clearsightedness into such delightful literary form. Montaigne would have loved him. Lamb, who died when the career of Holmes was just beginning, would have called him brother.

Over in King's Chapel, where Holmes had a pew in the gallery during most of his long life, there is a tablet to his memory. He is not buried there, but his friends very properly wished him to be commemorated in that old-time building of Boston; only, the tablet is really entertaining, although that is the last word that would usually be thought of in regard to any cenotaph, for it begins its description of Holmes with the words "Teacher of Anatomy," letting "Essayist and Poet" follow!

Curious, you see, the order of precedence. No ad-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

mirer of Holmes, outside of Boston, would ever have thought of his fame as an essayist being second to anything else, least of all as being second to his fame as an anatomical teacher. He was, doubtless, an excellent surgeon, and being of an original bent of mind he put his originality into all he did, and long ago some of his surgical or medical opinions led some one of the Teutonic name of Neidhard to write a book attacking them, and another controversial anti-Holmes book came from the equally Teutonic-named Wesselhoeft, but these men and their books are themselves no more forgotten than is the fame of Holmes himself as a surgeon.

And yet, at a dinner in honor of Holmes, on his seventieth birthday, when friends and admirers gathered from various cities, President Eliot of Harvard arose, after there had been general felicitation of Holmes as a man of letters, and said: "It seems to me my duty to remind all these poets, essayists and storytellers that the main work of our friend's life has been of an altogether different nature. I know him as the professor of anatomy and physiology at Harvard for the last thirty-two years. You think it is the pen with which Doctor Holmes is chiefly skillful. I assure you he is equally skillful with the scalpel."

That is delightfully remindful of the meeting of Voltaire and Congreve, when Voltaire expressed his pleasure at meeting so distinguished a literary man, and Congreve stiffly replied that it was not as a literary man but as a gentleman that he wished to be considered, whereupon Voltaire promptly replied that he

## THE CITY OF HOLMES

did not need to come so far to find a gentleman. Holmes must have thought of that, though as guest of honor he could not speak of it! He knew perfectly well that these admirers had not come there to find a surgeon. And he must have remembered, with glee that was tempered with chagrin, that although Harvard had long honored him as an M.D., Boston in general had refused to take him seriously, as a doctor, after he had jokingly let it be known that "fevers would be thankfully received."

Of all Boston writers it would be expected that Oliver Wendell Holmes would choose the finest and most attractive house to live in, and this not alone because of his being a man of such ability but because he so loved the fine things connected with the fine old times, and because his own life began in a house that was a most charming example of old architecture. I well remember the house where he was born; it was over in old Cambridge, close to the Common, but it has been destroyed for some reason, and the spot stands empty; I well remember what a fine old pre-Revolutionary house it was, picturesque in the highest degree, the kind of house that delights the imagination, low-set, homelike, yellow and gambrel-roofed; but he has written of it himself:

"Born in a house with a gambrel-roof,—  
Standing still, if you must have proof.—  
'Gambrel?—Gambrel?'— Let me beg  
You'll look at a horse's hinder leg,—  
First great angle above the hoof,—  
That's the gambrel; hence gambrel-roof."

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

The ideals of Holmes were all of the olden-time. He stood, as he frankly said, for the man who could show family portraits rather than twenty-five cent daguerreotypes, for the man who inherits family traditions and the cumulative humanities of at least four or five generations; and among these cumulative humanities one would have expected Holmes, of all men, to rank high the possession of an old-time house, rich in the feelings and traditions of the past. But after living through his early years in a house that was a thing of beauty, Holmes did not find it a joy forever to continue to live in a fine house, but chose instead to live in commonplace houses! Nor, after writing as he did of the striking down of thousands of roots into one's own home, did he settle down in any one house for a lifetime! The trouble was that, all unconsciously, he was in this regard not living up to his own ideals. His ideals led him toward the old and beautiful, the things connected with ancestry and the past; but with old houses it seems to have been with him as it was with old furniture; he writes apologetically, somewhere or other, of loving old-time furniture but of keeping it practically hidden in some out-of-the-way room, and he seems to have felt the same perverse desire to keep from showing any outward love for old houses. He chose a home for himself, not even on Beacon Hill, although close beside it; he chose to live in Bosworth Street, then called Montgomery Place, a court leading off Tremont Street opposite the Old Granary Burying Ground, and ending in a few stone steps, arched with a wrought-



## THE CITY OF HOLMES

iron design, leading down to an alley which borders where once stood the ancient Province House and where antiquarians still point out what they say is a fragment of the Province House foundation wall. All this region was long ago given up to business, but where Holmes lived is still pointed out at the farthest left-hand, next to the corner of the court, and it was never an attractive place, and the next door house, still standing, is positively commonplace. Still, with a curious perversity, he lived here for almost twenty years, and here wrote almost all of his remarkable "Autocrat." It was a well-to-do neighborhood, and perhaps even wealthy, but it missed being distinguished.

But Holmes finally tired of the house and died out of it. I use his own words to express his moving away from it: for, as he writes, after referring to his having lived in this very house for years and years, and then leaving it, people die out of their houses just as they die out of their bodies. He and his family, he narrates, had no great sorrows or troubles there, such as came to their neighbors, but on the whole had a pleasant time, but "Men sicken of houses until at last they quit them," as he goes on to say.

Whereupon one feels sure that this splendid Autocrat would surely, the next time, choose a home in which he could feel pride. But, no! He went to the Charles Street house, which was a house as commonplace as the one he left. Here, however, he had the water immediately behind the house, with its sunset glows and the distant hills. Still restless, he moved



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

again, and this last time to the house in which at a mellow age he died, at 296 Beacon Street: not the Beacon Hill district, but in the Back Bay extension of Beacon Street. Again he had chosen a house with back-view on the waterfront, but, still perverse on this subject of homes, he had again chosen an undistinguished home and undistinguished environment, although it was a house and a neighborhood of well-to-do but monotonous comfort.

One naturally wonders whether, had he chosen a home more fitting to his ideals, he would not have left behind him more than the single superlative book he did leave. But as that single book is really in the very first class, of its kind, perhaps it was all for the best, after all.

One likes to think, and I am sure it is more than a mere fancy, that the influence of that beautiful house in Cambridge, the birthplace of Holmes, extended in at least a considerable degree over his entire life, and it assuredly had much to do with making him a finely patriotic man, devoted to the best Americanism. For there was much more to that house than age and gambrel-roof and beauty; there was association with the most heroic deeds of our American past; for that very house was headquarters of the Committee of Safety, and the American soldiers who were to fight at Bunker Hill lined up in front of that very house before making their night march to the battlefield, and stood with bared heads while the President of Harvard College, standing on the front steps of the house, prayed for the success of the American arms.

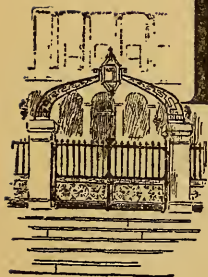
## THE CITY OF HOLMES

Those associations thrilled Holmes throughout his life, for even in the house where he died, far down among the houses of the Back Bay, one likes to remember that, looking from his windows, the thing which most of all impressed him was (a fact of Boston geography surprising even to many a well-informed Bostonian) that from those windows he was able to see Bunker Hill Monument.



## CHAPTER VI

### A HOUSE SET ON A HILL



IT was Oliver Wendell Holmes who remarked that the Boston State House is the hub of the solar system, and that you could not pry that out of a Boston man if you had the tire of all creation straightened out for a crowbar. And that is really the standpoint of Bostonians. Nothing else can possibly be so important as is Boston; and, to the Bostonian, his city seems to be represented by the State House. There is excellent ancient authority for the statement that a house set upon a hill cannot be hid, but even without this ancient authority there would be no disputing the fact that the State House, set as it is upon Beacon Hill, is not hid, for its gold dome, which used to offer a glory of literal gold leaf but is now not quite so striking in its more recent covering of a kind of gold paint, is visible not only to all Boston but to many and many a town and village beyond the limits of the city.

And somehow, when I look at this great dome, on its height, in Boston of New England, visible over miles and miles of the surrounding country and far

## A HOUSE SET ON A HILL

out over the water, I think of another Boston, a Boston in Old England, with its splendid tower rising far into the air and visible for many, many miles across land and sea alike. And the name of this American Boston came straight from that English Boston, and hundreds of the English Boston people were the first of the settlers of this American Boston, driving out, as they did, by their presence, friendly though it was, the hermit Blaxton whom they found established here before them, with his thatched-roofed cottage and his little rose garden and his spring on what was long afterwards to become Louisburg Square. What an interesting life story Blaxton's must have been! How it tantalizes the imagination! And yet, as to so much of the romantic in New England, the New England mind is rather cold toward him, as is strikingly illustrated by no less a man than Henry Cabot Lodge who, after telling of the mystery of Blaxton and of the little that was ever known of him, except—and what an except!—that he was a Cambridge man who exiled himself, with his library, to the absolutely unbroken wilderness and marvelously made a charming home here, with his flowers and books, in the early 1620's, goes on to add, Boston-like, that although all this seems dimly mysterious and excites curiosity, the story would “no doubt prove commonplace enough” if we could know more about it!

I have often thought, when looking at the dome on Beacon Hill, that the early settlers, looking at the early beacon that, on the then much higher hill, long

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

preceded the State House here, must have been strongly reminded of their church-tower beacon of St. Botolph's at home, and that they would have been intensely pleased could they have known that this great dome was to stand here, and that, every night, it was to be a beacon superbly glowing with great rings of light that shine far out over the countryside.

And remembering that English Boston, with its splendid, tall, truncated tower, that was in times of danger a beacon tower, and its veritable tide-water Back Bay (even though it may not have been given that name), and its comfortable old homes, and its air of centuries of solid comfort and prosperity, and its wonderful great open market still existing and probably looking much as it did three centuries ago (no wonder the American Bostonians, remembering that market-place in England, promptly established an open market here!), the thought comes, of what ease and happiness and comfort and fine living were sacrificed for the sake of coming to America; for the Boston Puritans did not, as was the case with the Plymouth Pilgrims, come here from exile but from their native country and their comfortable homes. And yet there was another factor, after all; for they still show, in the English Boston, the gloomy prison where were held in confinement, for mere matters of opinion, some of the very ones who on their release planned the migration to America and freedom. Those men deemed freedom in a wilderness preferable to the chance of further imprisonment even in a charming old town, and preferable to living where their



## A HOUSE SET ON A HILL

minds, even if not their bodies, would be held in bondage. It is no wonder that America, settled in great degree, both Northern and Southern colonies alike, with people who came seeking freedom from one or another kind of duress, developed from the very first an intense movement toward permanent liberty on this side of the ocean; instead of being matter of surprise that our Revolution came, it would have been surprising, considering all this, if it had not come.

That Boston possesses its hub of the universe, its State House, is because, alone among the great cities of the country, it is not only a great city but the capital of a great State. One wonders just what would have been deemed the hub if it had not had its domed building set up here so prominently. No Bostonian ever thinks of it as the Massachusetts State House, but always as the Boston State House. Boston, the capital of early days, was wise enough to retain the distinction when it grew large. New York was the capital of its State and for a time was even the national capital; Philadelphia was the capital of Pennsylvania and, like New York, was for a number of years the national capital; but both these cities not only lost their headship of the nation but also relinquished such leadership of their own States as comes from being the political center. But Boston, once given the distinction of being the seat of government of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, continued to hold it, thus adding greatly to its importance and consequence as a city—and thus secur-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

ing its most striking architectural ornament, the State House, the most beautiful feature of which is known, from the name of the architect, as the " Bulfinch front." Originally, however, it was a front of brick with pillars of white, and originally the dome was covered with plates of copper, rolled and made by Paul Revere, but Revere's copper has had many a patch and replacement and the entire front of the building itself, below the dome, has been painted; it was for many years painted yellow, but is now white.

This high-set building, on its high elevation, undoubtedly had its inspiration from some Greek temple on a hill. Bulfinch, like the great English contemporary architects whom he so much resembled, the Adams, gained his knowledge of beauty from an intense and loving study of the Greek in books and in travel in Europe.

The building has all the advantage of a noble position of which noble use has been made. Its superb colonnade of pillars is symmetrically so spaced, with four pillars singly in the middle and four in doubles at either end, as to obtain the most admirable effect; the effectiveness of thus using double pillars on the front of a building instead of single-spaced pillars only, being strangely overlooked by most architects. This noble colonnade is surmounted by a temple-like pediment over which rises the great dome, and below the colonnade is an admirable row of arched openings from which the steps sweep down to a broad grassy space which stretches off toward a terrace above the Beacon Street sidewalk and thus toward the trees

## A HOUSE SET ON A HILL

and grass of the Common, the iron archway at the sidewalk being a most effective bit, in its Greek detail.

The work of Bulfinch is the more notable because there was no model anywhere of precisely the kind of public building which he wished to build. No legislative hall existed such as indicated the general idea of republicanism. France was exchanging its kingly government for the rule of the people, but the theater at Versailles and the tennis-court satisfied the people's representatives. Meanwhile, in England, the House of Commons was quite content with the magnificent Saint Stephen's at Westminster. But Bulfinch was a big man, an individual man, who not only utilized the best he saw but who worked along lines of his own originality. And that he was not only original but successful is shown not only by the fact that one State after another copied his general model but by the fact that he personally was chosen to complete the design and the building of the capitol at Washington—the entire world knows with what supreme success.

The Boston State House is a distinctly American building, and everywhere within it there is a general air and atmosphere of courtesy towards strangers, and a readiness to show anything of interest, not only without the desire for tips but without the possibility of giving them. And not only has the American Bulfinch front been preserved, but also the original Bulfinch interiors.

Here, with its windows looking out over the Common, is the original Senate Chamber, with its fine

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

barrel-roof ornamented with classic ornaments on the rectangular spaces of the ceiling. It is a small-galleried room with an air of quiet perfection.

The beautiful room in the very center of the old front is the original Hall of the Representatives. When built, this hall was large enough to hold only chairs without any desks, as there used to be so many members in proportion to the population of the State that the meetings were almost State meetings! It is a large room, made octagonal by four niched corners; these corners, now niches, having once held fireplaces where cordwood blazed cheerily for the very practical work of heating this great apartment. In addition to a large candelabrum hanging from the center of the ceiling, which was a candelabrum in fact, to be used for candles only, each member needed to have a candle at his own seat for use in the early darkness of winter afternoons, and each member was expected to buy his own candles for his own personal use; a state of affairs that would positively appall any public servant of to-day.

The walls are of white pine, cut and painted to represent even-set blocks of marble, and there are felicitous balustraded galleries for the use of the public. The ceiling is domed above this entire room, but the dome is a long distance beneath the gold dome that tops the building, and is not its inner surface, as one might at first suppose on looking up from this floor.

These old rooms are all in white, which admirably brings out the lovely classic perfection of detail, and there is beautiful relief given by a various use of

## A HOUSE SET ON A HILL

blue and buff in certain places and by the high-placed windows, rayed and oval. The great coat-of-arms, the old clock, the speaker's seat, the corridor along the front behind the pillars, each is an achievement in design and dignity.

In these two old meeting-halls are preserved relics which, though few in number, are of profound interest. Here on the wall is an old musket; not a remarkable musket in itself, one would say, but just one of the old-fashioned flintlocks; but it is really one of the most remarkable muskets of history, for it was not only captured in the running pursuit from Concord, but was the very first gun to be captured from the British in the war of the Revolution. Here, too, is the musket that fired the shot heard round the world, for it is the very musket used by Major John Buttrick, who commanded the embattled farmers at their stand at the bridge in Concord. Here, too, is a drum which rattled through the sound of the rifles on Bunker Hill. The intent has been to give place only to relics of special distinction.

In the new part of the building there is a rounding room of yellow marble, richly ornate, which is a veritable shrine for Americans, for it nobly displays three hundred battle flags that were carried by Massachusetts soldiers in the War of the Rebellion.

Also, in the new part of the building is the State Library, where is preserved the invaluable Bradford history, the story of the Plymouth Pilgrims, written by Governor Bradford himself. It is necessarily under glass, and is kept opened at one of the yel-



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

lowed old pages, where, in plain old-fashioned handwriting, still perfectly legible to-day, it is set down that "Haveing undertaken for ye glorie of god and advancements of ye Christian faith and honour of our king & countrie, a voyage to plant ye first colonie in ye northerne parts of Virginia," the company are about to frame certain laws and ordinances which he goes on to enumerate. The invaluable manuscript is carefully put into a fireproof safe at the close of every day. It is remarkable for the number of words on each page, for the average seems to be about four hundred. If any visitor wishes to read more than the single page which is shown him under glass, he is freely offered, for perusal, a large photographic copy in which he may, if he so desires, read every page as if in the very handwriting of the old governor.

In the new portion of the building are seemingly endless corridorred vistas, with a permeative impression of new mahogany desks and a great deal of bronze and tawny marble. There are also the present-day meeting halls of Senators and Representatives.

In the new Hall of the Representatives, in this new part of the building, hangs a wooden codfish "as a memorial of the importance of the Cod Fishery to the welfare of this Commonwealth," as the phrasing was of the resolution which ordered, in 1784, that a codfish be suspended "in the room where the House sat." That was in the old State House, still standing down town, and it would also seem that the custom was older than that particular fish. It is almost certain, too, that this very codfish of wood, now hanging

## A HOUSE SET ON A HILL

in the new room of the Representatives—their second room in the new State House—is the very one which was suspended in the room in the old State House in pursuance of the resolution of 1784, for in 1895, over a century afterward, it was ordered that the “removal of the ancient representation of a codfish” from the old hall to the new be carried out. Whereupon, a committee of fifteen proceeded to the old room of the Representatives, and, wrapping the symbolic wooden cod in an American flag, proudly bore it in state to the new room, which would seem to be the third room for this sacred codfish, as it is commonly called.

But except for the codfish and the Bradford manuscript, and the battle flags, it is the older part of the State House that is of interest to the visitor. And there is more than the old meeting halls of the Senate and House of Representatives. There is still the Governor’s room, an apartment of unusual dignity, with its white pilasters and cornices and windows and fireplace, all curiously and perfectly balanced. I know of no other such room, precisely like this in proportions, for it is an exact cube in its dimensions of length, breadth and height. And it is a success, in that it looks like a room made for the use of one man rather than for the purposes of a board meeting or an assembly. Also, it is the kind of room which would be not only filled, but would have the appearance of being really furnished, with people standing, as at a governor’s reception. Old-time architects had a way of thinking of such things as the purpose

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

and the use, not only of houses but of particular rooms, and this is one great reason why so much of the work they did is called by us moderns felicitous.

Remembering that Bulfinch excelled in stair design, it is interesting to notice the wonderful little staircases in the old part of the building; staircases that are lessons in good taste, as is also the grand staircase itself, with its heavy four-sided balusters and its very effective mahogany rail.

The entire building, as originally designed by Bulfinch and built under his direction, had a frontage of 172 feet and a height of 155 feet, but, splendid old building that it was, it cost only \$135,000. The land upon which it was built was two acres or so of what was "commonly called the Governor's pasture," because it was land that was owned by the widow of Governor John Hancock, recently deceased, and although the State appropriated \$40,000 for the land it had to pay in reality only \$20,000. How times have changed!



## CHAPTER VII

### A PICTURESQUE BOSTONIAN



THE most prominent Bostonian of Revolutionary days, the Boston man who loomed the largest and still looms most important, was the splendidly dressed John Hancock, and his home, up near the summit of Beacon Hill, was a radiant center of wealth and society. But that home, so typical of the finest and choicest old-time life and architecture, has gone: some half century ago, in spite of the entreative protests of all lovers of the stately and beautiful, it was torn down for the sake of replacing it with a huge house that is hopelessly humdrum. Even the fine old furniture, so representative of the best old-time life, and which had the additional value of being so associated with the man of mighty signature and Dorothy Q., was lost or scattered. Out in Worcester I saw a superb double-chair of Chippendale design, that had stood in the Hancock home; in Pilgrim Hall in Plymouth is a noble settee that was of the Hancock furnishings; in Marblehead, in the Jeremiah Lee mansion, I saw six mahogany chairs, Heppelwhites, beau-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

tiful in design and workmanship, which, so tradition tells, were purchased at a Hancock auction, and carried up to Marblehead on a sloop, after John Hancock's death. The portraits, by Copley, of Hancock and his wife, are fittingly in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts.

Hancock was such a big figure in his time, and filled such a space in the public eye, that here on Beacon Hill, where his house stood, near the State House that has since been built upon his cow pasture, his presence still seems to be felt. Yet not only was his fine home destroyed and his fine furniture scattered, but before these things happened his widow had changed the name of Hancock for that of one of his own ship captains, and forever left the house where, with the gorgeous John, she had welcomed so great a number of personal guests and guests of the State or the Nation. When Lafayette visited Boston in 1824, he was escorted, by a great procession, through the streets, and passing along Tremont Street, beside the Common, thoughts came to him of the noble hospitality that had long ago been extended to him in the Hancock mansion, which was then still standing, on the other side of the great open space beside him. Full of such thoughts he lifted his eyes to a window—and there sat Mrs. James Scott, once Mrs. Hancock! Many years had passed; but he recognized her, he stopped the carriage, he rose in his place and, hand on heart, bowed low; and as the carriage resumed its way she sank back, overpowered by the rush of memories. And such things make the



## A PICTURESQUE BOSTONIAN

past seem but yesterday, for the past still lives when one can feel its very life and watch its pulsing heart-throbs.

But Boston never really liked Hancock. That, as a rich merchant, he was placed in great public positions of a kind usually given to lawyers, roused the jealousy of lawyers, and every effort was made to ignore or belittle him. And he was an aristocrat; and revolutions always dislike aristocrats. He was the one conspicuous aristocrat of Boston who sided against the King, the others refugeeing to Halifax, and when the war was over, and families came in from Salem and Quincy (Braintree) and other places to become the leading families of Boston and make themselves Boston ancestors, Hancock was the only prominent representative of the *ancien régime*. He was himself born in what is now Quincy, but had come into Boston long before the Revolution to be associated with his wealthy uncle there. His position, his wealth, his fine mansion that stood so proudly on the hilltop, his lavish hospitality, with gayety and wines and dinners and music and dancing, made for jealousy among those who were invited, and for heart-burnings and backbiting among those who were not invited at all or not so often as they thought they ought to be. On the whole, he could not but make enemies, and the Boston of even to-day is still moved by their enmities.

It was not until 1915 that this, his own city, would even put up a memorial to him—yet this belated memorial, which is set just within the entrance of the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

State House, shows by a brief enumeration how great a man he was, for, beginning with the admirable phrasing, "John Hancock, a Patriot of the Revolution," it goes on to enumerate, with dignified brevity, that he was President of the Provincial Congress of 1774, that he was President of the Continental Congress of 1775-1777, that he was the first signer of the Declaration of Independence, that he was the first Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and was again, afterwards, made governor, and that he was president of the Convention that adopted the Federal Constitution. An amazing list! A man who could occupy positions so dignified, so responsible, so honorable, not only among his own people but as a chosen leader of strong men gathered from all parts of America, must have possessed remarkable qualities of leadership.

More than anything else, Hancock's clothes and his ideas of personal consequence made him enemies! He bought costly material. He wore his clothes with an air. He was a Beau Brummel of public life; he was more than that, for he also lived in state and with stateliness. All this was more noticeable in New England than it would have been farther south, and his colleagues either hated or disparaged him for it.

In the old State House, now maintained as a museum, not this new State House, there are preserved some of his clothes, and I noticed in particular a superb coat of crimson velvet and a splendid gold-embroidered waistcoat of blue silk: there are, too, some dainty slippers of white satin and blue kid,

## A PICTURESQUE BOSTONIAN

with roses of silk brocade, that his wife had worn. These things were, from their somewhat sober coloring, belongings of advancing years, but I remember a description of Hancock as a leader of fashion when a young man, and even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed more splendidly, for there was a coat of scarlet, lined with silk and embroidered with gold, and there was a waistcoat embroidered on white satin, and there were white satin smallclothes and white silk stockings and silver-buckled shoes and three-cornered gold-laced hat! He was often called "King Hancock" from the ostentation of his appearance and equipage, and a contemporary description declared that he appeared in public with "all the pageantry and state of an oriental prince," attended by servants in superb livery and escorted by half a hundred horsemen. And another account tells of his loving to drive in a great coach drawn by six blooded bays. Hancock's gorgeous clothes and gorgeous ostentation were too much for Boston, and many years after his death even the genial Holmes took a humorous fling at him:

"The Governor came, with his light-horse troop,  
And his mounted truckmen, all cock-a-hoop;  
Halberds glittered and colors flew,  
French horns whinnied and trumpets blew,  
The yellow fifes whistled between their teeth  
And the bumble-bee bass-drums boomed beneath."

From all that one reads of Hancock's manner and appearance, and from the size of the signature that he so conspicuously and bravely set down, first of the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Signers of the Declaration of Independence as he was, one would gather the impression of a big consequential man, overbearing and pompous; but fortunately there is Copley's portrait to be seen, and Copley did not thus picture him.

Mrs. Hancock, "Dorothy Q.," Copley pictures as a slender lady in a pink silk gown with tight sleeves, and a tambour muslin apron, and a tiny black velvet band around the neck, and if her forehead is a trifle too high and bare and her lips a little too suggestive of selfishness, why, on the whole it is an attractive face; and John Hancock himself is shown as a slight and slender man, without pomposity of expression or bearing: just a quiet, agreeable-looking man, handsome and intelligent, dressed without ostentation and with extreme neatness, in a plain gold-braided coat, with simple white ruffles at the wrists, and white silk stockings, sitting at a desk, pen in hand, turning the pages of a ledger. There is no better way of coming to a judgment regarding the character of the old-time leaders than by studying their portraits, when they were painted by such masters as Copley, Trumbull and Stuart, and such paintings give at the same time a feeling of intimate personal acquaintance with the men portrayed.

Hancock must have been a most unusual man, to win leadership as he did in the face of depreciation and criticism. His great conspicuous signature alone would mark him as unusual; and when he signed, it was with full knowledge that he was taking greater risks than most of the other signers, not only because

## A PICTURESQUE BOSTONIAN

of his prominence as the first of the list but because he knew from personal observation the strength of England, having been one of the few who in those early days had crossed the Atlantic. It is curious to know that Hancock, the First Signer, was present at the coronation of George the Third! At the time of the Declaration, he had been proscribed for more than a year, on account of Revolutionary activities, and when he set down his bold signature he exclaimed: "There, John Bull can read that without spectacles! Now let him double his reward!"

That he risked so great a stake as he did, that he risked great wealth and high social position as well as life—few in the North or the South risked so much—ought to have gone far toward endearing him to his contemporaries; and, indeed, it was all this, combined with qualities of leadership, that gave him such successive posts of importance. But doubtless there was something in his personality to arouse dislike, more than can now be seen. That he was, in present-day phrase, his own press-agent, quite capable of writing ahead to announce the time of his intended arrival at some place, and deprecating the idea of popular enthusiasm being shown by taking the horses out of his carriage—his own idea, thus put into the heads of others!—gives some intimation of how he won disfavor.

The tablet set into the fence in front of the house that has replaced his, seems in itself to bring his figure to mind, with all his picturesqueness of dressing and dining and living and driving and posing; for



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

he was certainly much of a poseur. But he was romantic, too. He married Dorothy Quincy early in the war, at Fairfield, Connecticut, while he was still a proscribed man, unable to return to Massachusetts under forfeiture of his life; and, the house being afterwards wantonly burned in one of the barbarous burning coast-wise raids of the British, he sent down material for a new house from Boston, when the war was over, for its rebuilding, with the understanding that it should be rebuilt as a copy of his own house in Boston. It is worth while adding to this romance in house-building, that the Fairfield house, rebuilt so largely at Hancock's expense in memory of the happy event there, was completely altered in appearance, by a new owner who did not care for beauty, about the same time that Hancock's house on Beacon Hill was torn down by an owner similarly iconoclastic. But the story of the romantic marriage at Thaddeus Burr's house in Fairfield is still remembered in the old Connecticut village, and the little Fairfield girls are still named Dorothy in a sort of romantic memory.

One thing is hard to forgive him, and that is his flight from Lexington, though that is something that Boston itself seems not to question. He had left Boston with Samuel Adams, as the first clash of the Revolution approached, they two being specifically cut off from mercy by the English Governor's proclamation which was at the same time offering mercy to any others who should seek it. The two men had taken shelter at Lexington; they had been awakened by Paul Revere at two o'clock in the morning of the great

## A PICTURESQUE BOSTONIAN

19th of April; they thought that the British would like to capture them even more than to destroy the military supplies in Concord; and they deemed discretion better than valor, and fled. It is true that they were proscribed, and it is possible that they did not expect actual deadly shooting to take place that morning, but they also knew that British soldiers were out from Boston on grim duty and that the minute-men were gathering. As they fled they heard the bells of village after village solemnly sounding across the dark countryside. But they did not turn back and stand with the farmers whom their own leadership had taken into rebellion. What an opportunity they had! What an opportunity they missed! How gallantly they would forever have figured in history had they even, after running away from Lexington, joined the minute-men at Concord or on the glorious running fight to Boston! It was an opportunity such as comes to few—and instead of accepting it Hancock was sending word to his fiancée, Dorothy Quincy, who was at the home in Lexington where he had found shelter, telling her to what house he was fleeing and asking her to follow and to take the salmon!—a particularly fine specimen that he had hoped to eat at breakfast. And Dorothy Quincy followed and actually took it, and it was cooked—and then came poetic justice, in the shape of a man wild with the this-time-mistaken news that the British again were near, whereupon Hancock and Adams once more fled, salmonless, and when breakfast was at length eaten there was only cold pork. No wonder, years afterward, Mrs. Han-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

cock wrote, "The Governor's hobby is his dinner-table, and I suppose it is mine."

Neither Hancock nor Samuel Adams had the two o'clock in the morning courage that makes a man brave when confronted with swift physical emergency: but they both possessed in a high degree the courage that makes well-dressed men, when combined with other well-dressed men, risk resolutely their lives and property and honor. But the lack of physical courage did not prevent either Hancock or Samuel Adams from being given lofty positions of trust and from being, in turn, governors of Massachusetts.

In general, the site of a vanished building is not particularly interesting, but the simple tablet on the iron fence, showing where stood the picturesque house of the picturesque Hancock, and the belated memorial in the State House, which was built upon his own grounds—he had intended presenting the land to the State for the purpose, and the memorandum for the deed of gift was under his pillow when he died—summon up, as of the moment, the remembrance of this man of the past. The land, the hill—the Bostonian disparagement!—all are still here, and here is the very Common across which he loved to look and along the side of which, in front of his mansion, he loved to pace, with stately dignity and in stately clothes!

But it was against the sternness of Puritan law for any one to stroll, no matter how sedately, on the Common on Sundays, and the story is told that even Hancock, at the height of his power, when taking the air one pleasant Sunday afternoon in front of his house

## A PICTURESQUE BOSTONIAN

on the Common, which he doubtless looked upon almost as his own front yard, was incontinently pounced upon by a constable and, in spite of his choleric protestations, triumphantly led away! The story may be apocryphal, but it bears all the marks of truth, in the desire to humble Hancock, and at the same time to stand for the sanctity of the Sabbath.



## CHAPTER VIII

### A WOMAN'S CITY



THE Sunday observance law which John Hancock found, to his annoyance, could be invoked even against a man of power, provided that "all persons profaning the Lord's Day by walking, standing in the streets, or any other way breaking the laws made for the due observance of the Lord's Day, may expect the execution of the law upon them for all disorders of this kind"; and the city still gives a general impression of respect for the Sabbath. As long ago as 1711 Increase Mather told the Bostonians that a great fire of that year had come as a punishment for not observing the Sabbath with sufficient strictness, and his admonition was promptly heeded and, so it would seem from appearances, has been heeded ever since—although, one regrets to observe, without noticeable results in the way of fire prevention.

The city does not, however, give the impression of being particularly religious. It religiously cele-



## A WOMAN'S CITY

brates Sunday with fish-cakes and brown bread, but it is without the general tramp-tramp-tramp of church-going feet that is heard on the Sabbath day in that city with which it is most often compared, Edinburgh. There is considerable church-going: it should not be forgotten that Boston has long been the center of Unitarianism and that it has become the stronghold of Christian Science; but the general impression of the city and its streets on Sunday is of a sleepy quietude with comparatively few people stirring about. But not all Boston is at church or at home, for in pleasant weather the principal roads leading back into the city are, at night, aflame with motor lights. It used to be that the Sabbath began on Saturday at sunset, and "upon no pretense whatsoever was any man on horseback or with a wagon to pass into or out of the town" till the time of Sabbath observance was over. Well, at least the horses had a day of rest. But on the entire subject of Puritanism, with its varied inhibitions, one cannot but think of that illustrative antithesis of Macaulay, perhaps quite unfair but at least quite unforgettable, that the Puritans hated bear-baiting, not because it gave pain to the bear but because it gave pleasure to the spectators.

The difficulty of even now getting food on Sunday in Boston is really amusing: of course, the hotels are open, but many restaurants, even such as cater to three-meals-a-day custom, close tight during all of Sunday!—and this, not merely in the business section, where closing would be justified, but in localities

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

where hosts of people, students of the myriad educational institutions, and temporary dwellers, without home ties or home facilities, are wholly dependent upon these local restaurants. Restaurant-closing is a survival of Sunday observance; Boston, except as to its own individual appetite, would fain remember the Sabbath day to keep it hungry.

Restaurants, by the way, average better and cheaper in Boston than in other great American cities. In no respect, indeed, is the city more admirable than in being a place where people of limited means but excellent tastes and desires may live economically and at the same time with self-respect: and this comes largely from the influence of the innumerable army of students, and visitors of the student class, and unmarried and self-supporting women. The general atmosphere of Boston is one of a pleasant economy which need not at all be associated with poverty.

The shopping districts have a number of attractive little restaurants and tea-rooms, managed by women or by philanthropic societies of women, where a type of food is offered which may, perhaps, be described as hygienic health food. There are also "laboratories" and "kitchens" and "food-shops"; not names that would attract one, I think, except in New England. Apparently, the next generation of New Englanders are not to be "sons of pie and daughters of dough-nut."

Also, one notices that there are very few restaurants open after the generally announced closing hour of eight, and one is inclined to say that the

## A WOMAN'S CITY

fingers of one hand, and perhaps even the thumbs alone, would number the places where after-theater suppers are openly offered. One restaurant freely advertises, without arousing comment or protest, that it is the "one bright spot in Boston" after theater closing. There are two or three hotels that cater to late comers, but there is little to attract those who would drop naturally into a cheerful restaurant but who balk at going formally to a hotel. As soon as the theater is over, the audiences scurry into the subway. Those who do not go to the theater are supposed to be in bed by ten o'clock or so. It gets late very early in Boston.

A curious effect of Sabbath observance that lasted until far into the 1800's was the omission by the theaters of Saturday night performances. The first breaking from the old ideals came in 1843, when the Tremont Theater of that time reluctantly gave a Saturday night performance to please the many visitors who had come to the city for the Webster oration at the dedication of Bunker Hill Monument. (It was in this theater, three years earlier, that Margaret Fuller and Ralph Waldo Emerson together watched the dancing of Fanny Ellsler, when, so the tale runs, Margaret whispered ecstatically, "Ralph, this is poetry!" to which came the philosopher's fervent response, "Margaret, it is religion!")

It is curious, with Boston's theaters, to find that several of the best-constructed or most popular—the terms are not necessarily synonymous—are on streets that amaze the visitor with the impression of being

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

shabby or narrow or hard to find, such as Eliot Street or Hollis Street, or Tremont Street in a section where it suddenly loses its excellent appearance; naturally, this sort of thing does not strike a Bostonian, because he is used to it: it is like a man knowing his way familiarly about in his own backyard, although it would merely mean unattractive exploration for a stranger. The theater which, more than any other, appeals to the "best families" and for which it is the tradition, though by no means the general practice, to "dress," is on a narrow, back, out-of-the-way street.

The venerable Boston Theater—soon, so it is understood, to be torn down, after a long, long existence—has its main entrance on Washington Street; but a secondary and highly interesting entrance, from the best part of Tremont Street, is through a long tunnel-like foot-passage, and then an actual underground passage beneath a building; and another theater, close by, has an entrance even more interesting, this being a hundred yards or so of subterranean passage, lined with mirrors, not only under buildings but underneath a narrow street; although one is so apt to associate underground passages, at least in an old city, with sieges or escapes or romance.

The old Boston Theater was opened in 1852, and the first words delivered from the stage were those of a poem written for the occasion, that had won a prize of one hundred dollars; one of the actors reading the poem, and the author of the lines being Parsons, Longfellow's Poet of the Wayside Inn. Even

## A WOMAN'S CITY

as late as that, the Saturday night closing tradition was still so generally adhered to that for quite a while no Saturday night performances were given in this theater; there were just five evening performances a week.

This city was particularly associated with the life of Edwin Booth. His very first appearance on any stage was at the old Boston Museum (now destroyed), in 1849, when he played Tressel to the Richard the Third of his father, Junius Brutus Booth. In the good old days, although there was no rivalry with the busy "movies," the theaters had a way of giving satisfyingly crowded evenings, and that particular performance of "Richard the Third" was accompanied by a farce of the decidedly un-Shakespearean name of "Slasher and Crasher." Another evening of two performances, "The Iron Chest" and "Don Cæsar de Bazan," this time in 1865 and at the Boston Theater, was to Booth tragically notable, for it was on that evening that his brother shot President Lincoln.

Those who, in the course of the many years of its existence, have come to know the Boston Theater, with its circling Auditorium and big steep galleries, and to love it on account of its boasted acoustic qualities, would have been incredibly amazed had they been told long ago, that the time was to come, in its theatrical career, when acoustics would not count: yet that time has really come, for it has been turned over to the "movies," pending destruction.

Among the many memories associated with the



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

theater is that of the great ball given here in honor of the Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward the Seventh, in 1860, when the wealth and fashion of Boston came here to do him honor. I have somewhere seen it noted that some fifteen hundred tickets were subscribed for, for that literally princely ball at the Boston Theater; one thousand for couples and the other five hundred for additional ladies accompanying them, thus making two women for each man, which would seem to point out that even long ago Boston was a woman's city.

At any rate, Boston is a woman's city now; not that women are collectively of more importance than men, but that they are of much more than usual importance: there is no other city in which women are relatively of such consequence. Yet it is not distinctively a suffragist city, and, surprisingly for a woman's stronghold, the women anti-suffragists are very active.

More than in any other city, women go unescorted and without question to theaters and restaurants. So many women are independent, so many women are employed in stores and in offices, that, more than in other cities, respectable women alone on the streets at night are a common sight, and they attract neither comment nor attention. They have what Barrie calls the "twelve-pound look." They are well-set-up, well clad, carefully shod, precise, good-looking: they go quietly about their business in a way that makes other people go about theirs. And it has worked out with perfect naturalness, through the safeguarding of respectable women, that the city government and the

## A WOMAN'S CITY

police see to it that those of another class are very slightly in general evidence. This does not at all mean that Boston is any better than other cities, but that a different situation as regards women in general makes for a different treatment of the entire subject of women. I know of a lonely woman, not beyond middle age, and what Bostonians call well-born, who, all of her relatives being dead, and she being deaf and very sensitive, spends almost every evening in the summertime sitting, until eleven o'clock or so, on a bench in the Charles River Parkway, looking out over the water; and I do not know of any other large city where a woman, not old, could sit on a bench in a public park, without attracting the slightest attention whatever.

The fact that so many women are so eminently capable of taking care of themselves brings about the natural consequence that they are freely permitted to take care of themselves; for example, in other cities one of the rarest sights is to see a woman carrying a heavy traveling-bag, but here in Boston it is a sight so common as to attract no notice whatever. In the daytime or at night-time you will frequently see a well-dressed woman, an independent *feme sole*, walking briskly along, heavy bag in hand; and I do not mean carrying the pleasant little Boston shopping bags but literal valises, and I have not infrequently seen a woman carrying not only one big valise but one in each hand.

On the average, too, this being a woman's city has had a not unnatural result upon woman's dressing,

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

it being, on the average, not quite so merely attractive or charming as it is in most cities. There is a great deal of highly excellent dressing on the part of the women, but it is excellent and good in the sense in which a man's dressing would be deemed good: it is not quite so much a matter of following the fashion as of wearing good clothes of good material; and, as with the men, the women are likely to keep their excellent clothes until they begin to show wear, instead of being quite so subject as are the women of other cities to what would be termed the whims of fashion. Boston has an extraordinary number of well-tailored women, but perhaps it may be said that it is mostly a matter of excellent grooming. There is a smaller proportion of women in Boston than in other cities who dress merely to flutter along a fashionable promenade to please the eyes of observers.

I noticed at the street door of a fashionable shop where they sell nothing more intimate than hats and millinery, a sign such as I never saw in any other city, for it bluntly reads, "No admission for men"! And it is not an emergency sign, for a crowded season, but is permanently lettered on brass. Imagine such a sign on a hat shop on Bond Street or the Rue de la Paix, or in Berlin, let us say, where the Emperor William loves to go out and buy his wife's hats and surprise her with them, and then expects her to simulate joy!

A marked result of the unusual consequence of women here is the unusual importance, both relatively and in themselves, of women's clubs; and the women

## A WOMAN'S CITY

show that they can excellently equip and excellently manage their clubs. One, the Women's City Club, has had the excellent taste to acquire for its club-house a building that is one of the finest examples of American town-house architecture; it is a house built by Bulfinch, and is one of a pair of balanced mansions, each with the distinguished bow-front of Boston and each with a beautifully pillared and fan-lighted doorway. This club-house is at 40 Beacon Street, and looks down on the pool and the elms of the Common, and it is worth becoming familiar with not only to see how excellently the women chose a headquarters but also to see what was the kind of house that Bulfinch won his fame in building.

The front hall is broad, with a small reception room at one side, and from it there starts upward, with a charming curl to the top of its newel-post, a most graceful, ærial, spiral stair which mounts up and up, a thing of ease and lightness and grace, toward the great round cupola or lantern that throws down its light from the roof for the entire stair. The rail is mahogany, the balusters are white, and the steps are white, with a crimson carpet.

What was originally the dining-room is the large room at the front on the main floor, and it swells finely into the swell of the great window-bow. The rear wall of this room curves backward in exact balance with the curve of the front, and its two mahogany doors are set into the curve, thus producing the effect of an oval room even though the side-walls are straight. A fireplace, in staid setting of white and green marble,

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

faces the door. The windows are large and mahogany sashed, with dark heavy curtains hanging straight down from up above the window-tops and caught aside with rosetted holders of brass; these club women aiming constantly to keep up, in adjuncts, with the excellent effect that Bulfinch with his architecture began. The doors, six-paneled and broad, are of mahogany, and those that are in the curve at the back of the room are themselves curved to fit it, such being the designer's completeness of detail. The door in the hall opens in two flaps and is broad enough to permit the guests to walk in to dinner two by two, in the old-fashioned formal way.

Behind the dining-room is the great old kitchen, with its open fire-place, its ovens, and its queerly built-in iron-domed concavities. Ascending the main stair, whose tread and rise are a delight, we enter an ante-room with a lovely, mellow marble mantel, and from this room pass through an opening with fluted pillars into what was the great drawing-room, this being an oval room, rich in fine Greek detail, with exquisite mantel, exquisitely molded cornice and exquisitely designed oval ceiling; a room by an American architect of which an American may be proud!

The house was built to be heated by wood fires, and a niche in the hall marks where an iron urn originally stood, which received its heat from a fire in the cellar for the heating of the hall, such being the method in use before the days of modern furnaces and furnace pipes; and it is interesting to remember that almost all of the houses we now see on Beacon Hill were



## A WOMAN'S CITY

built back in the days of wood fires, when the wood was sawed on the sidewalk and stored in the cellars, or in woodhouses in the yards; and that not only were there primitive methods of heating, and also of lighting, but that there was even no public water supply until less than three quarters of a century ago, and that almost all of these old houses still have wells in their cellars, even though the wells may in the course of time have been filled up.

In a sense Bulfinch, the architect of the house of the Women's Club, made Boston. He gave the city a high standard of architectual distinction. He gave it architectual individuality. He gave it the type of dwelling of which this club-house is such an admirable example. And not only did he admirably design dwellings and set a high standard which other architects were glad to follow, but he also gave to America its general type of State House. As the honored architect of the State House of Massachusetts he was called to Washington to take charge of the Capitol there, and his ideas as to public buildings have been followed throughout America. Any city would have the right to be proud of this great man, and so it is particularly pleasant to remember that not only was he an American but that he was so much so that as a small boy he watched the battle of Bunker Hill from the roof of his father's house.

It is interesting that when, toward the close of his life, Bulfinch was asked if he would train any of his children in his own profession, he naively replied that he did not think there would really be enough left for

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

any architect to do! The different cities, he went on, and the principal States, were already supplied with their principal buildings, and he hardly thought there could be enough building to do in the future for a young man to make his living as an architect.

Perhaps it was from remembering that Boston is a woman's city that I thought of its being the home of Alice Brown, and there came the further thought that not only are the homes of writers of the past worth noticing, but also the homes of writers of the present day, especially when, as in the case of Miss Brown, the present day writer is one whose work is of grace and distinction. Naturally, I did not much expect to find the name of Alice Brown in the telephone directory; there would be "John Brown" and "James Brown" and other Browns, but not likely the one as to whose home I had become interested. Still, the telephone book was handy, and I might as well look.—And I realized as never before that Boston is a woman's city, for, each with her separate telephone number, there were nine Alice Browns looking up at me, so to speak, from the page! Nine Alices with name so Brown, as the old song almost has it! Fascinated, my eyes wandered up and down the columns, and I noted telephones for women Browns innumerable: three Annas, three Berthas, four Lauras, no fewer than twelve Marys, and an ever-lengthening list leading to Katharine and Sarah and Alice and Inez and Corah and Daisy and Lillia and Lilliah, up to one hundred and nineteen in all, and many a Browne more with an "e" to follow!

## A WOMAN'S CITY

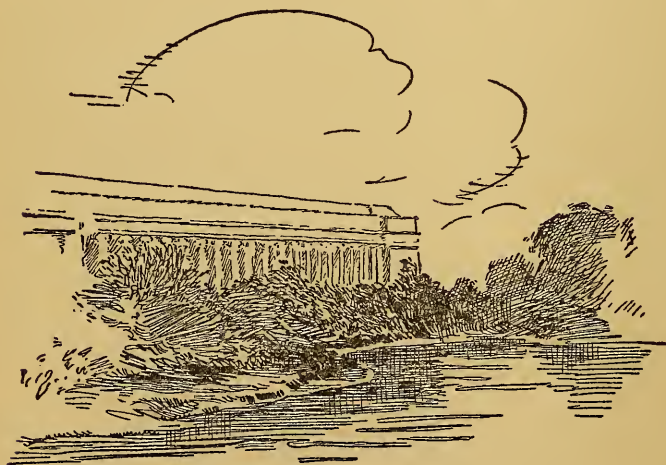
And as other names of the directory would be like Brown, I thought of how thin a telephone book would be Boston's if all the women's names were taken out! And even with the nine Alice Browns, the name of Alice Brown the writer is not to be found. But her house is on Beacon Hill, at 11 Pinckney Street; a brick house, prim, pleasant and precise, with iron-railed steps leading up to a curve-topped entrance-way.

That Boston is a woman's city came to me, just a few days ago, in still another way, for a Bostonian friend handed me a letter, just received, and said that I really ought to use it because it was so typical of old Boston and she knew that the sender would not be displeased if she should ever know it had been published. The writer of the letter is one of two elderly maiden sisters, who always dress in heavy black silk, and whose hair is still done in the prim, old-fashioned way of Civil War times, and who still live in the old house, in its still aristocratic neighborhood, in which they were born.

"I walked home," thus part of the typical letter runs, "doing several errands on the way, and most of the evening I was reading to my sister, and this morning I awoke early, lighted my candle and read until I had to get ready for breakfast!" She read by candlelight! What a picture in these modern days! "Then settled down comfortably to tackle a tableful of monthly bills waiting for the checks to pay them, stopping long enough to look over a list of kitchen furnishings that the cook had ordered and to

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

write a Christmas poem which my sister had been composing, from her dictation!" What charming old-fashioned sisterly sympathy—and a Christmas poem! "Now it is one o'clock, and I haven't begun my bills, and there are the dinner chimes. We dine at one" (old-fashioned again!), "myself, my sister's attendant and her secretary, and sometimes"—what a touch!—"our stately black cat."



## CHAPTER IX

### THE DISTINCTIVE PARK STREET CORNER



THE unusual prominence of monuments to ministers in Boston might, at first thought, be ascribed by some to the fact of this being a woman's city; but of course, as any Bostonian would at once tell you, it is really because of the unusual prominence of ministers in the development and life of the city. There is the memorial to Phillips Brooks beside his church, at a busy edge of Copley Square, he being set within a canopied marble niche, garbed in his bishop's robes, with an angelic figure behind him: and not far away, at the nearest corner of the Public Garden, there is niched, like a cinque-cento saint, the long-gowned figure of William Ellery Channing. Entirely unlike both of these, in its exceedingly unsaintlike appearance, is the monument to another minister, Edward Everett Hale, at a Charles Street entrance to the Public Garden, for he stands in wait in the shrubs, just inside the gate, in every-day clothes and long loose overcoat, stooping, as if pausing for a moment in his walk, with



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

his old-fashioned beaver hat in one hand and his cane in the other; a man honorably known to all Americans for his "Man without a Country."

To commemorate not only the clerical profession but the medical, there is within the Public Garden a monument that gave Holmes the inspiration for a brilliant bit of wit. The monument was designed to commemorate the discovery of Ether, the mastering of the whole problem of consciousness of pain in surgery, but while it was under construction a fierce and never-to-be-settled controversy arose as to which of two claimant physicians was really the discoverer, and so the monument was completed with the name of the man omitted, which led Holmes promptly to suggest, with that obviousness which marks all great wit, that it was not so much a monument to Ether as to Either.

There is an exceedingly prominent monument, the big equestrian of General Hooker, set up in front of the State House, which is also interesting on account of what is left off, for there is nothing but the single word "Hooker"; as if, one may fairly suppose, when they came to the matter of inscription, it was remembered that the only battle of consequence in which General Hooker commanded was the terrible defeat of Chancellorsville. It is sometimes delightfully wise to have brief inscriptions on statues. After all, New England was not fortunate in developing great military leaders in the Civil War, in spite of her prominence in the events and discussions preceding the struggle and in spite of the vast number of her men who gallantly went to the front; she developed no

## THE DISTINCTIVE PARK STREET CORNER

Grant or Thomas or Sherman; and already she has practically hidden, off on one side of the State House, statues of the never-prominent General Banks and General Devens. But monumenting in haste and repenting at leisure is something far older than America. And it is a favorite Boston belief, long held and often expressed, that if she should set up statues to all her distinguished sons there would be no room left in which people could move about.

Diagonally across from the Hooker monument, just away from the corner of Park and Beacon Streets, close to the altered Ticknor homestead, is a little house, tucked in among towering business buildings and faced by a great hotel: and this house, still a home, is filled with paintings collected years ago in Europe. It stood before the Revolution (its front has been changed), and about 1830 was the home of Chester Harding, the New England-born, backwoods artist who, after making his success in Paris—but it was a Paris in Kentucky—painted the great ones of America and of England, including judges and senators and some half dozen of the dukes, and then came back to Boston. For some time while in Boston he so eclipsed Gilbert Stuart that that great painter was wont to ask, looking at his own empty studio and knowing that Harding's was thronged, "How rages the Harding fever?"

Close by is the Athenæum, most charming and delightful of libraries, full of serenity and repose and rich in its great collection of books. Not only does it possess the workable and readable books of recent

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

years, but precious prints and books and manuscripts of the past, and such treasure as the greater part of the library of George Washington, each book, with his signature and bookplate, deposited here after its purchase in 1849 by "seventy gentlemen of Boston, Cambridge and Salem," who contributed fifty dollars each to obtain it. To the Bostonian of tradition, the Athenæum still proudly represents the essence of the city; the building is admirably impressive outwardly, it is attractive and full of atmosphere within, and it is rich in the very spirit of the best of Boston. Its main entrance has a replica of Houdon's life-size statue of Washington, a replica, modeled by Houdon himself, of the original, which was made for the State of Virginia and is preserved at Richmond; Houdon having come to America to make a statue of Washington, at the request of Franklin, who knew him in Paris.

The main reading-room, occupying the great upper floor, is of unusual architectural beauty, with its vaulted roof, its pillars and alcoves, its general fineness and comfort. The library is peculiarly fitted to the needs of the scholar, and membership in it, to be a "proprietor," as is the term, is highly esteemed.

The great rear windows of the Athenæum look down into the ancient deep-shaded Granary Burying-Ground, and off at one side, also looking down into the burying-ground, are the windows of that monthly, the *Atlantic*, which is itself another of the treasured belongings of Boston: and especially is the bowed window noticeable when one learns that it is the window of the oval room in which James Russell Lowell

## THE DISTINCTIVE PARK STREET CORNER

reigned as editor and where he still looks down benignantly from the wall, like a patron saint: and although one may do full honor to his memory and to his fine influence, the profuse and double-pointed whiskers do rouse the recollection of the little girl who asked: "But what are the points for?"

There are few more impressive burying-grounds in the world than the Granary, fronting out on busy Tremont Street and hemmed in on its other sides by towering business structures, by the phalanxed windows of the quiet Athenæum, by the publishing buildings, and by the old Park Street Church. The Granary has impressiveness, it even has beauty, and it has an aloofness that comes from its being some three feet or so above the level of the thronging sidewalk that it adjoins.

Anciently a granary actually stood here, but the place long since came to be a crowded human granary instead; and what a roll of fascinating old-time names might be called here! Hancock, Sewall, Bellingham, Faneuil, Samuel Adams, Franklin (the parents of Benjamin Franklin are buried here), Cushing, Phillips, Otis, Revere! There are royal governors, patriot governors, signers of the Declaration, orators, leaders among the citizens—it would be a long, long roll! And there would be a strange unexpectedness if responses should come, for many of the stones in this graveyard were long ago indiscriminately changed about. At one time they were even tidied and set in rows to meet the landscape-gardening and grass-mowing proclivities of a city official! There was some

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

mild objection to this, but nothing was done to check or correct the changing, and when, long afterwards, people began to speak strongly about it, it was too late, for records had not been kept.

Although Boston thinks a great deal of the people of the past, they would seem to have acquired somewhat careless habits of caring for their remains. Gilbert Stuart was mislaid. Major Pitcairn was lost, and it was probably a substitute body that was sent back to England as his, to rest in Westminster. The stones on Copp's Hill were changed about or used for doorsteps. And here in the Granary the municipal idiosyncrasy has been even more striking. It was Oliver Wendell Holmes who remarked of this graveyard, that the stones really tell the truth when they say "Here lies."

But although this carelessness of the past needs to be known it does not affect the dignity, the solemnity, the impressiveness of the place. It merely means that the visitor must be content to honor these worthies of the past in mass rather than in detail. They are all there. They all lie somewhere within the broad enclosure. Upon their confused resting-places the tall office buildings look down, and beside them the public go hurrying along the crowded sidewalk. They are somewhere here, beneath the shade of the thickly clustered horse-chestnuts and honey locusts, and it really is not worth while to try and pick out the still properly marked graves from the mistaken ones.

One of the two young duellists of whom Holmes wrote, who fought to the death on the Common, is



## THE DISTINCTIVE PARK STREET CORNER

buried here, and it is curious that this seems to be better remembered, by most people, than does the fact that here were buried so many great and famous folk, although that young duellist has no claim to fame except that of dying in a duel which seized upon the imagination of the man whose personality permeates all Boston.

A high, open, iron fence standing on a low, dark retaining wall, separates the burying-ground from the street, and the entrance is through a black and gloomy stone arch, with a suggestion of the Egyptian in style, flanked at either end of the wall by a black stone pillar.

It is pleasant to notice that with such a great area of office buildings looking down into this resting place of American dead, there is scarcely a business sign to be seen, although the opportunity and temptation are so great. It is a fine example of business restraint. Indeed, one at first thinks that there is absolutely no sign at all, for it is only by carefully looking for them that two or three very little ones are found.

From the Athenæum itself, from a little high-perched coign of vantage there, a little outside summer reading-place which fairly overhangs the back of the Granary graveyard, the most striking of all views of the inclosure may be had, for from this point one looks down through the treetops on curving lines of little dull-colored headstones, standing shoulder to shoulder on the green dark grass, under the gloomy trees, like gloomy spirits of New England consciences forever looking out, with drooping shoulders, through

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

the great iron fence, upon the passing of their descendants and successors.

The Granary burying-ground antedates the church beside it, the fine old building, with Christopher Wren-like steeple, known as the Park Street Church. And one is tempted to think of this church as, on the whole, the most typically Bostonian building of Boston. On its prominent corner at the foot of the slope leading up to the State House, and with its windows looking out on one side over the Common, and on the other one the Granary ground, it seems as if it had grown there, so natural it is, so easy, so graceful, so felicitous, standing there in so sweet a pride.

The delightful spire is notable, not only for the perfection of its upper proportions but also in not rising from the building itself but, instead, forming the extension of a tower that itself rises from the ground, church and tower being connected by pillared curves, quadrant-like, which architectually unite them into an indivisible whole, with no sign of separation. There could not be a more charmingly picturesque corner, for the Common, than is made by this so charming and picturesque a church.

For many years the building was painted, and even in its dull drab was attractive, but it has recently been vastly improved, as a number of other old Boston buildings have similarly been improved, by the cleaning of all the paint from the brick and by the painting anew of all the wood; thus restored to its original design the church now positively sparkles in its white paint and mellow red brick.

## THE DISTINCTIVE PARK STREET CORNER

Park Street Church is not so old as are several others in Boston, for it dates back only to a little more than a century ago, but in its short life it has not been without claims to distinction; the first public address of William Lloyd Garrison was delivered in this building, and here for the first time the hymn "America" was publicly sung.

Beneath the church are a gay-looking flower-shop and picturesque tea-rooms, and they seem pleasantly Bostonian in their churchly location, for until recent years a bookstore was quartered in the basement of the Old South Church, and I have noticed a furniture-packing shop beneath a church at the foot of Beacon Hill, and it used to be, when the Hollis Street Church was standing, that its pastor, a powerful advocate of prohibition, used to deliver attacks on drink at the same time that the vaults beneath his feet were rented by three pillars of his church, distillers, for the storage of casks, giving rise to the still-remembered epigram:

"Above, the spirit Divine,  
Below, the spirits of wine."

The corner where stands so felicitously the altogether attractive Park Street Church has itself given rise to a flash of real wit, especially notable as showing that Holmes did not utter every witty Boston saying. For this came from a certain long-ago Appleton, brother-in-law of Longfellow, famed as a humorist and *bon vivant*, a man of wealth and family but whose humor, still remembered reiteratively, usually

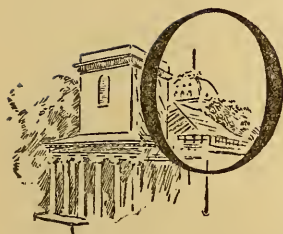
## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

took some such form as sailing for Europe, without telling any one, on the very day that he was expected to be host or guest at a dinner. However, the corner beside Park Street Church really inspired him to one excellent jest. For it is a very windy corner, one of the windiest in all Boston, and Appleton dryly remarked one day that there really ought to be a shorn lamb tethered there!



## CHAPTER X

### TWO FAMOUS OLD BUILDINGS



IN a February night in 1688, a striking funeral pageant passed through the streets of Boston; the funeral procession of Lady Andros, the wife of Governor Andros. And how far away that seems! 1688—that was the far-away year that marked the downfall of the second James. That year seems far away even when one is over in England, and therefore it seems curiously far away in this New England. Yet in 1688 Boston had for decades been settled. People had already begun to think of it as a long-established place. People had already begun to look with interest at those who could rightfully claim the title of “old inhabitants”!

That winter-night funeral of Lady Andros made a grimly striking scene. A hearse with six horses drew the body. Soldiers lined the way. Torches flickered and blazed to light the snowy streets. Candles and torches lighted the old church. Six “mourning women,” as they were called, walked behind the body until it was set down before the pulpit and then they seated themselves beside it like dismal ghosts. The



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

church was crowded. The minister, with the grim directness of old times, preached frankly from the text, "All flesh is grass." And when the ceremony was over the body was borne out of the little chapel, a building standing where now stands the Old South Church, on what is now Washington Street, and carried to the burying-ground now known as that of King's Chapel, on Tremont Street, King's Chapel itself having not then been built. That winter night funeral was dramatic indeed.

What is supposed to be the grave of Lady Andros is still to be seen, here within this ancient inclosure of King's Chapel Burying-ground, and here too is many another of interest. The supposedly oldest remaining stone is that of a certain William Paddy, who died in 1658. Born in the year 1600, this man; born twenty years before the sailing of the *May flower*; born while Elizabeth was still Queen; yet here in Boston is his grave, still marked. Here rest the remains of many a Leverett and Wendell and Mather and Cotton, and especially is it the last home of many a Winthrop, and in a Winthrop tomb lies that Mary Chilton Winthrop who not only was one of those who crossed in the first voyage of the *Mayflower* but who, so the delightful old story has it, was the first woman to land in America from that immortal ship. I do not know how one can come to a more practical and more vivid appreciation of the American past, than by stepping aside, from the busy, rushing street, into the down-sloping bit of burial-ground, hemmed in by street and chapel and business blocks and city hall,

## TWO FAMOUS OLD BUILDINGS

and standing beside the very tomb within which lie the remains of that *Mayflower* passenger, the first woman to step upon the Rock.

And modestly, very, very modestly, far over at one side of the graveyard, stands a stone which marks the resting-place of one Elizabeth Pain, and it simply records without any of the old-time reference to beauty of character or beauty of life or the grief of the remaining relatives, that she departed this life in 1704; and a sort of chill comes, a grim feeling of the severity of the past and of the present, when you know that this is understood to be the grave of the poor woman who gave to Hawthorne his idea of Hester Prynne: for it will, of course, be remembered that the scene of the "Scarlet Letter" was Boston and not Salem, although it was in Salem that the book was written. The poor Elizabeth with the suggestive surname was one of the earliest Americans to learn that the fatted calf is never killed for the prodigal daughter.

Here in this really ancient graveyard is the tomb of Robert Keayne, who founded, half a century before the time of the Andros funeral, his Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, which is still existent. Over at one side of the enclosure, I chanced upon the name of Tudor, a name mildly prominent in early New England history; and the thought comes of that New England Tudor—could this have been the very one!—who, when presented at the court of King George the Third, caused a look of pleased astonishment to come over the bored face of the monarch at

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

the mention of his name: "Eh, eh, what! Tudor? One of us, eh, what?"

The present King's Chapel, beside the old burying-ground, is a pillar-fronted, rather low, square-towered building, a building rather dark and dusky in effect, built not on the general lines of most of our early churches, but following the design of some of the old-fashioned little churches of London. And the pillars are not of stone, as they seem to be, but of wood. Taken by itself it would seem to be a veritable bit out of London. The very first King's Chapel was built here in the very year in which Lady Andros died, and although that first building was wood instead of stone, and although it was a little smaller than the present chapel, which is itself quite small, it must have been a church with a great deal of display and impressiveness, for along its walls were hung the escutcheons of the King of England and of the various Royal Governors who had been sent out to Massachusetts. Even in those early days it was looked upon as rather an ostentatious building.

The present chapel was built over a century and a half ago; services were first held here in 1754; and the interior is not without a certain richness of effect, simple though it is. It is really a cozily attractive little church, with its white walls and galleries and pillars and its square pews with dark mahogany top-rails and linings of red baize. The pairing of the pillars adds much to the excellent effect, as do also the Corinthian capitals. The ceiling is unusually low even for a small church and there is also the un-

## TWO FAMOUS OLD BUILDINGS

usual feature, for America, that the floor is made of small square stones. The comfortable, square, enclosed pews seem additionally quaint and comfortable from their being fitted with stands for canes and umbrellas, and little shelves for prayer-books and Bibles, and even with chairs in addition to the fixed benches of the pews.

Tradition has not preserved the precise location of the pew in which Washington sat when they gave an oratorio in this building to entertain him in 1789, but one may fairly suppose that it was the pew known as the Governor's Pew, which was in early days surmounted by a canopy and in which sat in succession a line of pre-Revolutionary royal governors, beginning with Governor Shirley, who laid the cornerstone of the building. Here, too, sat General Gage and Sir William Howe, in the early part of the Revolutionary War. Familiar as Washington was with the churches and the architecture of the entire country he must have looked with much interest at the high-set pulpit, the very pulpit which is still in place and used, for it is believed to be the oldest in New England and possibly in the United States; it dates well back before the building of this present building, for it was transferred from the earlier church to this, and is said to be at least as old as 1717 and perhaps to have been in the older church from its very beginning in 1688. It is certainly interesting, with its twisting stair charmingly enclosed with panels and pilasters, and its heavy suspended sounding-board.

King's Chapel has a connection with what is often

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

written about as one of the romances of early American days, for one of those who united to build the present structure was that Sir Henry Frankland who, up at Marblehead, fell in love with the inn-keeper's pretty daughter, Agnes Surriage, and brought her to Boston; his pew is still remembered and is the one now numbered 20; but Frankland played anything but a manly man's part, and the masters and lovers of real American romance, Longfellow and Hawthorne, did nothing, I think, to give the story its amazing vogue.

The present organ of King's Chapel was sent out from England in 1756, and has from time to time been rebuilt and enlarged, and it is said to have been the personal selection of the mighty Handel, who tested it and played upon it at the request of King George the Second, who counted him as a friend and asked this favor of him.

There are various old monuments, inside this church, of worthies of the past, including a noticeable one, in the most florid Westminster Abbey funeral style, to the memory of Samuel Vassall, who belied his name by being very independent indeed, and who won fame and wealth as a patriotic merchant in the old days when loyalty meant loyalty to the King.

The funeral of General Warren, who was killed at Bunker Hill, was held in this chapel after the city came into the possession of the Americans. There, too, was held the funeral of Charles Sumner. And among the monuments within the building is one to men who were connected with this chapel and who



## TWO FAMOUS OLD BUILDINGS

died in the Civil War. Already our churches are coming to be like those of England, where there are memorials to the men of war after war in never-ending succession.

A cheerful memory of this chapel is that it was the regular place of worship of Oliver Wendell Holmes who, year after year, sat in pew 102 in the south gallery. One may fancy what a trial or what a reward it must often have been for the rector, after some argumentative or oratorical effort, to glance up and catch those keen eyes looking at him with appraisal in the glance; it must have kept a succession of rectors well up to the mark to know that such an autocratic critic was watching them.

The King's Chapel Burying-ground used to be known, long ago, as the Old South Church Burying-Ground, although the Old South Church is a few blocks away, and on Washington Street.

On the front of the Old South is an inscription which tells that the church gathered in 1669; that the first church building was put up in 1670; that the present church building was erected in 1729; and that it was desecrated by the British troops in 1775-6. But this enumeration of facts and dates quite ignores an event which a great many people would deem the most interesting of all, and that is that Benjamin Franklin was baptised here in 1706.

What a busy day that was in the house near by, now long since vanished, where the Franklins lived! The father Josiah, and Abiah his wife, attended service at the Old South Church in the morning.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Little Benjamin was born at noon. And that very afternoon he was proudly carried to church to be christened!

One cannot but remember Benjamin's own summary of the lives of his parents. "Without any estate, or any gainful employment, by constant labor and industry, with God's blessing, they maintained a large family comfortably, and brought up thirteen children and seven grandchildren reputably." "He was a pious and prudent man," records Benjamin of his father, Josiah; and of Abiah, his mother, he faithfully records that she was "a discreet and virtuous woman."

In the front of the church, beside the tablet of dates, is a placard which, although meant to express the standpoint of the old-time patriots as a lesson for future generations, is positively misleading, for it refers to winning victories for liberty and the people "under the law." But there could not be a greater misapprehension. The whole standpoint of the patriots of the Revolution is missed. The Revolution stood for bravely acting against the law, for not heeding danger to life or estate when it seemed right to act against the constituted authorities. The tea ships, the fight at Lexington, the stand on Bunker Hill—what an absurdity to think of such things as "under the law"! It is a solemn thing for a people to stand against the law, but the glory of the Revolution was that the patriots did stand against the law. When Joseph Warren made his entry through a window into the pulpit of this very church and there de-

## TWO FAMOUS OLD BUILDINGS

nounced in fiery words the British soldiers, the very officers and soldiers who crowded about the front of the pulpit while he spoke, he had no thought of acting under the law, nor did he dream of being under the law when, three months later, he bravely gave his life as the British came charging up the hill over in Charlestown.

The Old South is a neat and attractive building of brick with a slender spire of wood. The spire is graceful, but the tower that supports it, and which itself projects a little upon the busy sidewalk, is heavy in proportion.

Entering the church through a vestibule beneath the tower we find that the interior has not been treated in the usual style of the Gothic nave, but is broader in proportion than would be expected in a church; it has its pulpit, not at one end, but in the middle of one side; and, unexpectedly for such a small building, there are two galleries facing it. The pulpit is only in part the original pulpit, but the needful restoration was made along the original lines; it is of admirable shape, with pillar supports and elaborate cornice, and it has a little rounding projection of mahogany on its front, a sort of pleasing bulge, for the standing place of the speaker. The window behind the pulpit is big and broad, a sort of Palladian window, flanked by reeded pillars; and as one stands here it is impossible not to picture the thrilling scene when Warren made his way through this window, opened for his entrance, stepped to the little bulge in front of the pulpit, and with superb bravery delivered his thrilling ad-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

dress to the people who packed the building itself and the very aisles and entrances. It was a brave day for America.

The building long ago won the high-sounding name of the "Sanctuary of Freedom," because within it were held some of the most momentous of the town-meetings that preceded the Revolution; and during the Revolutionary War it was singled out by the British for contemptuous treatment, and was turned into a riding-school for cavalry, and tons of earth were thrown upon the floor to give footing for the horses; and in addition the pews were burned to keep the soldiers warm. One may regret the burning of the old pews, but it would not be in the least a regrettable act if the present cheap-looking wooden chairs, with cheap perforated seats and backs, could be given to the British or anybody else, and burned. It cost over \$400,000 to save this church from being torn down for the erection of a big office building, and Boston people gladly raised the huge sum, and it does seem a pity that a very little of that sum was not utilized to put in fitting benches, if not pews.

A few relics of Revolutionary days are shown in this building, and there are photographs, to suit the taste of such as care for such a thing, of the skull of General Warren, showing the fatal bullet-hole: an exhibition which perhaps might have been spared.

Not only were the old pews burned by the British, but many valuable books and manuscripts regarding early New England, that had been stored in the tower of the old church, were also brought down and thrown

## TWO FAMOUS OLD BUILDINGS

in the fire to help keep the soldiers comfortable in the cold winter days of the siege.

And the most important manuscript in the world, as a leading New Englander, Senator Hoar, in his formal speech on the final recovery of the manuscript, called it, was seized upon with others of the treasures of the Old South tower, and was preserved by some strange and never to be explained chance, and long afterwards was discovered by another of the strangest of chances, over in England, and at length was returned to America. This was the absolutely invaluable holograph account of the *Mayflower* expedition, and of the early days in Holland and in Plymouth, by the great Governor William Bradford himself; and the story of this manuscript is the most extraordinary literary romance of the world.

When the books and manuscripts were dragged down from the tower this manuscript, which afterwards came to be known mistakenly as the "Log of the *Mayflower*," was spared, though no one knows by whom; no one knows whether its value was even guessed at, but presumably it must have been, for it was carried to England, no one knows by whom, and when the Americans once more took possession of the city, it was not to be found and was supposed to have been burned and its records and data thus forever lost.

More than half a century after its disappearance, an English bishop, the Bishop of Oxford, wrote a book, which attracted scarcely any attention, on the history of the church in America, and, quite a number



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

of years after its publication, an American, turning over the leaves of the bishop's history, was startled by some references to a manuscript, undescribed except as being in the possession of the Bishop of London in the library of his palace at Fulham. The American —there is some question as to whether it was a man named Thornton or one named Barry—was fortunately one who knew early American history, and he knew that the facts quoted in that book on the church could have only one source, and that was the Bradford manuscript, which had been quoted to some extent by early American chroniclers and which everybody supposed had long ago been lost. At once definite inquiry was made, and it was learned that this was indeed the long lost work of Bradford, although neither the Bishop of Oxford nor the Bishop of London himself could throw light upon how or when it had come into English possession.

Americans at once began a campaign to recover it, frankly taking the ground, when they met with delay and doubt, that the excuse of loot in war time had never been applied to the permanent retention of literary treasures. The English themselves were inclined to agree with this, but things moved slowly, and it took about half a century before negotiations were fortunately concluded. They might have been going on even yet had it not been for another of the strangely fortunate chances in regard to the history of this manuscript, and this was that a new Bishop of London was appointed who felt cordial toward the United States and said frankly that he, for his part, would

## TWO FAMOUS OLD BUILDINGS

hand over the manuscript if he were given the authorization of his superior, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and that soon after this he was himself appointed, by a whimsical chance, Archbishop of Canterbury! Whereupon, in 1897, the thing was done, and the invaluable manuscript came back to Boston and was welcomed with great ceremonies and public speeches after its strange absence of a century and a quarter.

But it was not again deposited in the Old South steeple! Instead, as the prized possession of the State of Massachusetts, and not of Boston alone, it is kept in the library of the State House, up on Beacon Hill, and is there shown freely to any one who cares to see it.



## CHAPTER XI

### TO THE OLD STATE HOUSE



**I**N early days Washington Street, upon which the Old South Church faces, was known in its successive sections as Cornhill, Marlborough Street, Newbury Street and Orange Street; names not thrown away but frugally saved to be used in a new district; and all were merged in the patriotic name of Washington because Washington himself entered the city along this route at the time of his visit in 1789; and perhaps the naming was partly in amends for having kept him waiting for two hours, mounted on his white horse, just outside of the town limits, while the State and town authorities debated on just how he was to be received.)

It was fortunate that Washington had drilled himself to patience and at the same time that he well knew how to hold his dignity, for in the early days of the adoption of our Federal Constitution a burst of anger on his part, or even of impatience, no matter how well justified, might have had a disastrous national effect, as might also any impairment of the President's proper position. Yet, though he looked

## TO THE OLD STATE HOUSE

upon a little waiting as too minor a thing to be taken notice of by a great man, he did not overlook Governor John Hancock's not coming to call upon him. Hancock stayed at home, as if thinking a Massachusetts governor more important in Massachusetts than a President of the United States, and as if expecting Washington to make the first call; but this, Washington absolutely refused to do; not only his own dignity but the dignity of the nation was at stake; and on the next day Hancock, swathed in explanatory flannel wrappings, belatedly and formally called, offering an alleged attack of the gout as an excuse for not calling the day before. And perhaps the gout was real. Or, if Hancock had but tardily done honor to the first President, it was probably because John Adams, the first Vice-President, had entered Boston in the President's company, and that Hancock and John Adams were far from being friends, Adams having even gone to such a length, in his jealousy, as to term Hancock an "empty barrel"; the resounding sound of which appellation must have reached Hancock's ears. But there ought not to have been any real ill feeling on the part of Hancock toward Washington, whatever may have been the case as to John Adams. Hancock had named his only son after himself and Washington, John George Washington Hancock, and that the little fellow had recently died would assuredly make even closer the personal tie between President and Governor.

✓ Other streets of old Boston have had their names changed, for reasons not so excellent as those which

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

gave the city Washington Street, and on a few of the corners the old names are given as well as the new, but in the main the old ones are forgotten.) The greater number of changes seem to have been made because, as the city grew bigger, it became more finical; and one realizes that Frog Lane would not be so excellent a business address as Boylston Street, that Pudding Lane and Black Jack Alley would seem less respectable than Devonshire Street, that Black Horse Lane is more dignified, if that were all, as Prince Street; but it is not clear why the delightful name of Royal Exchange Lane should have been altered, except actually during the time of the Revolution, to Exchange Street, and it is hard to reconcile oneself to Broad Alley becoming Hollis Street, to Turnaway Alley becoming Temple Place, and to Coventry Street becoming the prosaic Walnut; one may quite sympathize with changing Blott's Lane to Winter Street but feel that romance was lost in altering Seven Star Lane to Summer Street; and if it might be objected that Seven Star Lane does not sound citified enough there would really be no objection to calling it the Street of the Seven Stars.

Washington Street, and especially that part which is directly through from the Common, has especial interest in the difference between its general aspect in the evening and its aspects during the day. In the morning the better part of it is crowded with the women of the socially elect doing their shopping, and in the afternoon with women whom the socially elect consider *hoi polloi*; and the men who thread their way



## TO THE OLD STATE HOUSE

along the narrow-sidewalked shopping sections in daytime are alert business men, not too intensely hurried; the daytime is the time of Boston bags and prosperity; but in the evening, for a few hours—never until really late, for this is an early city—it is differently thronged and brilliantly lighted, and at this time it gives much the aspect of the main street of a busy English mill town, crowded as it is with the people who come for the “movies” and the cheaper theaters, or who are out simply for a stroll.

Boston has not lost capacity for enthusiasms; cities, like men, need that; but Boston shows enthusiasm in a typically quiet way. I have seen Washington Street, in the business center, jammed solid for several blocks with a crowd, estimated by the police as numbering from twenty-five to forty thousand, which absolutely stopped traffic, and all these people had gathered to watch the score-boards of several newspaper offices that are close together there; for the Boston club was playing for the League championship in old Philadelphia. The streets were packed to capacity for a long distance within sight of the boards, and the windows and roofs were crowded with decorous, neat, well-tailored, well-dressed, self-restrained men, every one with his shoes polished and his hat on straight. It was a very proper crowd. Many of the men were ready to yell if an announcement were extremely favorable, but even then they would not yell very loud. The business men and office clerks of the city had given up an entire business afternoon to follow in packed decorousness the record of a baseball game.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

A walk of less than five minutes on Washington Street, from the Old South Church, takes one to the corner of State Street, where once stood the bookshop which graduated that superb artillery officer, Henry Knox; and here there opens out what is known as State House Square, out in the center of which stands the Old State House.

✓ Once in a while, in Boston, it is necessary to say, in differentiation, the New State House or the Old State House, for when the new one was put up the old one was preserved, and it stands among the new business buildings of the busiest district of the city.) Extremely strong efforts have from time to time been made to destroy this old building and use its site in important business development, and great financial temptation has been offered to the city, and the arguments for the needs of business were really so cogent that a few years ago it seemed as if the city would yield to them. It had already yielded, so far as giving over the building to rental for offices and other business purposes was concerned, and there was danger that the entire building would be given up. But while the city wavered, hesitant and doubting, the news went out through the country that perhaps the long-treasured building was doomed, whereupon a formal message came from the city of Chicago, offering to buy the old structure in order to tear it down and rebuild it, brick by brick, out there on the shore of Lake Michigan. The structure would thus be kept, so Chicago with earnest dignity expressed it, as an American monument for all America to revere.

## TO THE OLD STATE HOUSE

Of course that settled it. Perhaps the building would have been preserved in any event, but after that message, had Boston decided to tear the building down, it would have been quite impossible for her to throw away the bricks when Chicago was ready not only to pay for them but to build them up again and honor them, and it would have been altogether unbearable for Boston to think of people going to Chicago to see this old State House!—and so it still stands here.

It will be remembered that Chicago won another victory for the world by offering to buy and set up within its own precincts the birthplace of Shakespeare, when that building was about to be lost to Stratford, and in that case, as in this, the offer by that broad-mindedly acquisitive city of the West was sufficient to secure the preservation of the old building on its original site. It is interesting to speculate what buildings of the world, whether in America or Europe or Asia, will in time be pleasantly captured by Chicago in this way.

✓ The Old State House is a building of piquant individuality; it would easily attract attention anywhere; without knowing anything about it one would be sure that it must be a building of interest, and it is.)

✓ It stands at what was long the center of much that was important in old Boston. ✓ In the open space beside it and beside the still earlier building that preceded it was the early public market of the city; in fact, the public market was not only beside but under the earlier building, which, in the old English

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

market-place way, was built upon pillars, leaving the level space beneath the building as an open arcade for the merchants.)

Even the present building has a history that goes back to 1713, and when, about forty years afterwards, it suffered a disastrous fire, at least the walls of 1713 were saved, thus preserving the early felicitous shape and proportions of the building.

Hereabouts went on much of the early Boston life. Here in the open square stood a cage, for the display, in restrained publicity, of such as had dared to violate the Sabbath; here were the stocks; here was the pillory—reminders, these, that all was not gentleness and moral suasion in the days of yore!—and here stood, even into the nineteenth century, the whipping-post. It is not with any spirit of criticism of the past that these things are mentioned; it is proper to speak of them, that we may not forget that the past was not altogether perfect.

Nobler and more tragic than such associations is the association with what has always been known as the Boston Massacre, of 1770; directly in front of this building is where the fatal shooting by the English soldiers took place, that roused a wild storm of indignation that even yet is remembered, and which in itself had much to do with intensifying and crystallizing the sentiment in favor of an actual and final break with England. In the general excitement of that time and the feeling that at any moment, should the demands of the citizens for the removal of the soldiers from Boston not be heeded, there might be actual war-

## TO THE OLD STATE HOUSE

fare, most of the men of Boston were under arms, and even John Adams took his turn with others, as a soldier, at this very building, coming, as he has with his own hand recorded, "with my musket and bayonet, my broad sword and cartridge box." It is an interesting remembrance of the trial of the English soldiers, that followed, that two of them who were actually convicted of manslaughter escaped punishment by pleading the very ancient English plea of "benefit of clergy"—which had nothing whatever to do with literal clergy, but only with the ability to write, which was anciently supposed to be an accomplishment of the clergy alone, who as a class were immune from punishment.

In outward appearance the Old State House suggests a memory of Holland. It elusively but charmingly indicates a bit of Dutch architecture. It has a long line of dormers on each side of its roof, and in the center rises a quaint tower, in square-sided sections which go up in diminishing sequence to a little belfry. At either side of the gable lines on the high and almost corbel-like corners of the façade, the square-shouldered front that faces out toward the onetime market-place, stand the lion and unicorn, effective and highly decorative, breezy copies of the originals which were thrown down and destroyed in the Revolution, gayly gilt like the originals, and looking almost royally rampant as they face each other across the central clock which points out that times have changed.

✓ In the center of this façade is a beautiful second-



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

story balcony of stone, in front of a many-paned central window with curving pediment.) From this balcony many a speech has been delivered and many a proclamation has been read, from the time of the early Colonial governors down, but the long succession of royal proclamations came finally to an end when, on a July day in 1776, to an exalted throng of Revolutionary citizens gathered in this open space below, there was read the full text of the Declaration of Independence, which had been relayed to Boston as fast as a galloping messenger could take it. "In the brave days of old!"—these fine old familiar lines may well be applied to Boston.

✓ From this very balcony, ten years before the reading of the Declaration, was proclaimed the repeal of the hated Stamp Act, and also from this balcony, at the close of the Revolution, the people were told that peace with Great Britain had been made and that full recognition of the rights of the American Republic had been yielded.)

✓ This old building was successively the Town House of Boston, the Court House, the Province Court House and then the State House; and after the State offices were moved into the big building on Beacon Hill it became for a time the City Hall.) The building is now restored, but has not suffered the misfortune of being over-restored, and it is given up to the accumulation and display of a collection, of fascinating interest, of a vast number of mementoes relating to early days; and like the Museo Civico of Venice, and others of that admirable class, it sets forth, with its mementoes

## TO THE OLD STATE HOUSE

toes, the things which represent the daily life of long ago.

Among the individual relics is a beautiful silver tankard, that was made by Paul Revere. It is a masterpiece of silver-smithing, and is so highly prized that it is held in place by a hidden lock and chain, in order to keep it should some thief break the glass case in an effort to snatch it away. Here, too, is preserved one of the original Revere prints of the Boston Massacre, which took place under the windows of this building, and it is so valued that it is put into a fire-proof safe every night. The building also holds, in one of its corners, a little old organ, which rivals the old organ of the Park Street Church with its "America," for this in the Old State House was one at which the stately old tune "Coronation" was composed and on which it was first played; it is an organ with lead pipes and is still playable and of excellent tone.

For a building which outwardly does not appear large, and which is really not large, there is in the interior an astonishing effect of amplitude. In this respect it is a marvel.

✓ There are various meeting rooms in the building, each of old-fashioned dignity, and in particular the fine big room, with its noble spaciousness, that is still known as the Council Room, as it was in the long ago time when the royal governors, richly appareled, sat here in formal state in conference with their councilors.) It is a room with twin fireplaces and big recessed windows and fine cornice and charming wain-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

scoting, and it is pleasant to remember that John Hancock was here inaugurated governor.

It is astonishing what a degree of beauty, what an amount of dignity, the earliest American architects were able to secure in their public buildings, and this in Boston may compare honorably with the best. There is the old Maryland State House in Annapolis; there is the one-time State House, Independence Hall, in Philadelphia; and there is the Old State House here in Boston; all of them pre-Revolutionary buildings of practically the same period, and all of immense dignity and distinction. The three are of very different appearance from each other but they are alike in continuing to be worthy points of pilgrimage for Americans and in having direct connection with important events of the past.



## CHAPTER XII

### FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE



**N**EAR the Old State House and, like it, tucked in among big office buildings, you come unexpectedly upon a broad, plump, portly, comfortable, restful building, with an aspect of age as well as this aspect of ease, and you search elusively for words to define its impression, and you know that the right phrase has come when you hear it called the Cradle of Liberty; for it is a building that gives a comfortable old-fashioned impression of a comfortable old-fashioned cradle—although this is not what gave it its cradle cognomen, but the fact that within its walls the fiery orators of pre-Revolutionary days made their most eloquent appeals for liberty.

It is a distinguished looking building, with its dignified regularity of windows, and the good old-fashioned dignity of its long sides, and its interesting round-topped tower. It is twice as large as it used to be—as Boston has grown so this cradle has naturally grown—but in doubling its length and increasing

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

its height it lost none of its good old-fashioned symmetry, for the great Bulfinch undertook the work of enlargement and gave it his utmost care.

The building was the gift, in 1742, of a public-spirited citizen named Peter Faneuil, who gave the money for it because he knew that Boston needed not only a good hall but a market-place to take the place of the earlier market, at the Old State House; and a market-place was accordingly established in the lower floor. The building was burned a few years later, and promptly rebuilt, and the final enlargement that we now see was made a little more than a century ago.

The hall itself, above the public market, is never rented, but is forever to be used freely by the people whenever they wish to meet together to discuss public affairs; and this alone would make the building proudly notable. And many a great man, and many a man who was deeply in earnest even if not great, has spoken in this hall. And it is still used freely for the public meetings of to-day.

The meeting hall, almost square, has a right-angled arrangement of seats, and, with its rows of Doric columns, is quite distinguished. And one notices that a winding stairway leads down from the very floor of the speaker's platform and wonders if it is to facilitate the entrance of popular speakers in case of a great crowd, or, on the other hand, to facilitate the hasty exit of the unpopular! One notices, too, that the balcony has peculiar effectiveness of proportion, adding much to the effectiveness of the entire hall, and further notices, as an additional point on the



## FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE

part of Bulfinch, that this comes from his having made the space above the gallery a little higher than the space below, although the first impression is to the contrary. It is the same idea, carried out here in simple wood, in early America, on a small scale, that the great Giotto carried out so splendidly on a large scale in his tower at Florence.

The great painting behind the speaker's platform is fittingly a painting of a great American oratorical scene, for it represents Webster, in the United States Senate, delivering his celebrated reply to Hayne. Webster himself has spoken here in this hall just as all the famous orators of New England have spoken here, and here were held some most momentous early meetings, including that which, several years before Lexington and Bunker Hill, stated the rights of America so plainly and imperatively as always to be held by the British to mark the real beginning of the Revolution.

The paintings of notables that hang about the walls are to quite an extent copies, but what is believed to be an original Gilbert Stuart is the big painting of Washington, who is represented as about to mount his horse, at Dorchester Heights. This painting, however, would not have been made by Stuart had it not been for a blacksmith! For it seems that a wealthy citizen wished to pay for a painting of Washington, to be hung in this hall, and the town meeting was about to decide to give the commission to a certain Winstanley, when the blacksmith interposed his objection. This Winstanley, a painter of no originality,

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

had worked up quite a business in copying the Washingtons of Stuart, getting the idea of doing so from the fact that Stuart's Washingtons had frankly been copied and adapted by Stuart himself—which was a very different matter. Washington himself, after sitting to Stuart, had freely and knowingly accepted a copy, by Stuart, of the painting that had been made from the sittings, and the original itself is now in the Boston Museum of Fine Arts. The only other Washington that was painted by Stuart with his great subject personally before him was what is known as the Lansdowne portrait, which journeyed long ago to England. Whenever, for years, Stuart needed money—which was often!—he painted a Washington for somebody, by copying or adapting from his own work. Winstanley knew of this, for there was no secrecy about it, and those who got these Washingtons from Stuart knew that they were copies or replicas, but that they were Stuart's own replicas; they were the results of the great artist's personal study of his great model; whereas the copies of Stuart that Winstanley made and sold, one of which made its way as a veritable Stuart to the White House, and was picturesquely taken out of its frame by Dolly Madison to save it on the approach of the British, were in no proper sense Stuarts. Yet when Faneuil Hall was to have its painting of Washington it was about to be decided to buy a copy from the ready Winstanley! And it was at this point that the blacksmith, who is remembered only as a man of the North End, arose and vehemently opposed the idea, declaring that to procure a

## FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE

copy of Gilbert Stuart made by some one else would be a lasting disgrace when Gilbert Stuart himself was actually living in the city. At that, Stuart was promptly commissioned to paint a Washington for Faneuil Hall. And it is a pleasant recollection that Edward Everett, in his eulogy of Lafayette, delivered in this hall, electrified his hearers by suddenly turning to this portrait of Washington and exclaiming: "Speak, glorious Washington! Break the long silence of that votive canvas!"

From time to time, there have been gatherings here not only for political objects or to record grievances, but for social ends, and one such was a meeting at which General Gage, the royal governor, at a time when he knew that the Port Act was about to ruin the commerce and business of the town, rose and proposed a toast "To the prosperity of Boston"! And another was the ball given here, some three-quarters of a century ago, in honor of the Prince de Joinville, at which time Faneuil Hall and the adjoining Quincy Market, which was long ago built to meet the growing market needs of the city and whose gable faces the gable of Faneuil Hall, were connected by a temporary bridge and both buildings were aglow with light and thronged with guests. Quincy Market is itself 535 feet long and covers 27,000 square feet of land.

Another reminder of Faneuil Hall came to me in Windsor, England, recently, for in an out-of-the-way corner of that old town, near the foot of a picturesque and almost mysterious stairway which leads down from the huge castle on its height to a postern-door,

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

I noticed a house with a tablet upon it. Something led me to cross the street to read, and I was interested to find that it was the home of Robert Keayne, who left old Windsor for Boston and founded in this new world the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, the oldest military organization in America. And how old it makes this country seem! For Keayne was born before the settlement of Boston, before even the settlement of Plymouth, and he founded the artillery company here in Boston in 1637, and the upper portion of Faneuil Hall is used as its armory.

Keayne was only a tailor over in England, and it used to be an English saying that it takes several tailors to make a man, but Keayne, coming to America, showed that the English saying does not apply on this side of the ocean, for he certainly was a man of capacity and affairs, a man who did very much to establish the foundations of early Boston on a strong basis. That his will, written with his own hand, and disposing of some four thousand pounds—quite a fortune for those days—covered 158 folio pages, and that it is said to be the longest will on record, at least in New England, is but one of the side-lights on an interesting personality; but the most interesting thing he did was to found his artillery company, and he did this because he was a member of an old artillery company in London. Any man deserves to be remembered who puts in motion something that remains prominently in the public eye for almost three centuries; and there seems to be no reason why his organization should not continue for centuries more.

## FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE

Down by the big and busy South Station which, when it was opened in 1899, was said to be the largest railway terminal in the world and which still claims to be first in the number of persons using it daily, one does not expect to find anything connected with the Boston of the past; as you walk there, you think only of the rumble and thunder of present-day business, for the streets are thronged with trolley cars and heavy trucks and the sidewalks are crowded with busy business men, and elevated trains hurtle by on their spidery trestles.

But you go on for a little beside the elevated, on Atlantic Avenue, and your attention is attracted by a bronze tablet, set into a building at one of the busiest corners, and something draws you to read it, and you find yourself deeply rewarded. Ordinarily, in these modern days, one does not stop to read tablets of the past on buildings of the present; one likes to look at buildings of the past and to read of the actions of the past, and it is likely to be rather uninteresting to look at a place which is merely the site of a happening and which is now covered with something which has no relation to that happening. But this tablet is one of the exceedingly worth while exceptions. At the top is the figure of a full-rigged, old-time ship, and beneath the ship you read that this tablet marks the spot where formerly stood Griffin's Wharf; and lest you forget what Griffin's Wharf was, the tablet goes on to explain that here lay moored, on December 16, 1773, three British ships with cargoes of tea, and that "to defeat King George's trivial but tyrannical tax of three pence



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

a pound," about ninety citizens of Boston, partly disguised as Indians, boarded the ships and threw the cargoes—three hundred and forty-two chests in all—into the sea, "and made the world ring with the patriotic exploit of the Boston Tea Party."

You cannot but feel stirred as you stand here, and the fact that where the wharf stood and ships lay is now all solid ground, built up with business blocks, does not take away from the sudden vision of the past which comes sweeping over you. For it was a right brave thing that those men did; it was an achievement of tremendous daring in the face of the power of England; and that the value of the tea was great added to the very real danger of most severe punishment: I have read, though it seems almost incredible, that the tea was valued at eighteen thousand pounds!

One should not, however, enter this district except on a Sunday. On Sundays all is quiet and deserted; scarcely a single person is met; it is almost a solitude, and it is an excellent time to continue to some of the nearby, old-time wharves which do still represent the old-time Boston waterside.

It is but a short walk, continuing along Atlantic Avenue, to a big wharf which, although almost covered with modern cargo sheds, still retains its ancient name of India Wharf. And the wharf also retains the great old India Wharf building, standing detached from all the modern shipping sheds and towering up to its height of seven stories—really a towering height in early American days. A big, brick structure it is, built with a broad center and two broad wings, and

## FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE

giving a striking effect of isolation—an isolation that is at the same time both shabby and proud. The big building faces out toward the water and gives a fine air of standing for the old shipping prosperity that meant so much in the early days of Boston; and I cannot remember a more romantic looking business structure in America.

The brick, laid in English bond, has mellowed to a weathered yellowness. The fifty windows of the façade were originally shuttered, but the shutters remain on only three, and beside the others the wrought-iron holders stick out like little black prongs. Some of the windows are arched with white stone; here and there across the building's front are remains of white marble lines; a monster chimney stands above the towering top of the middle gable; the two highest windows are fans, and a shelf between these two, now empty, up in the pediment, looks as though it was originally made to hold some figure, probably that of a ship; and the lines of the sash of these two lofty fans are like the longitude lines of a globe.

The pavement in front of the building is of enormous cobbles of granite, some of these blocks being as large as two feet by one, and they are just like ancient pavement blocks, such as one is accustomed to think of only in old Italian cities.

India Wharf and the wharves adjoining are not parallel with the shore line but project in long rectangles right out into the water of the harbor. Long Wharf, near by, was given its name because at the time it was built it was the longest wharf in the country; and be-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

cause it was so long, thus offering a point of military advantage, a battery used to stand out there on the very end of it.

Central Wharf is also interesting, with its long row of old-fashioned stone warehouses. In fact, this entire region tells vividly of the picturesque early business years before the great changes that came with railroads.

T Wharf—which, when you see it on the street sign, “T Wf.,” seems positively cryptic—is picturesque in a high degree, for old-time-looking, full-rigged fishing boats, with rattling yards and ropes, are tied up alongside, and on Sundays immense nets are spread out on the wharf, at great length, with their rows of cork floats. Sea-gulls whirl over the wharves and the water, and dart divingly for their food, and cry their harshly wailing note; and on Sundays the fishermen and their friends, Americans and Italians, congregate about these boats and the wharf; and some of the fishermen—or perhaps they are dock hands or market porters—make their homes in the oddest of fleets, a covey of perhaps a score of little mastless boats, painted blue or green, and anchored close to shore in a space between two piers. And everywhere is the permeative smell of fish. And often the close-gathered fishing boats mass picturesquely against the sky a great tangle of masts and ropes and spars.

Many of the buildings among these wharves stand on piling, and are partly over the water, and the wharves themselves are built of enormous blocks of stone, or of enormous timbers. In one place I noticed

## FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE

a long stretch of black beach beneath overhanging flooring, and it led back in strange, long, tunnel-like spaces among the wooden supports, into the distant darkness; and all seemed whispering of romance or crime.

Here one sees the long-forgotten sign of "Wharf-inger"; and there are little shops that sell all sorts of sailors' supplies: ferocious knives with blades a foot and a half long, fish forks with handles as long as hay forks but with only a single prong, fog horns, anchors, hooks, woolen "wristers," oil skin clothing, and "sou'westers" that have come straight out of Winslow Homer's paintings.

The sign, too, of "hake sounds" is remindful that this city of cod has also many another fish, for one finds there are the haddock, the mackerel and the herring; the scrod—which is really a little cod, although even Bostonians cannot always tell when the scrod becomes a cod or when a cod is still a scrod. There are the swordfish and spikefish; there are cusk and tinkers and eels; there are butterfish, flounders and perch; there are halibut and chicken-halibut; there are bluefish, sea-trout, bass and scup; there are oysters, lobsters, clams and the giant sea-clams so delectable in New England chowder; there are sculpin, tautog and quahog.

On Commercial Wharf is a row of uniform old buildings of dignified solidity, all broad gabled and of stone, with rows of little dormers like hencoops on their high slate roofs. When this wharf was built, about a century ago, it was by far the finest of the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

waterside blocks of buildings, and men whose ships traded to the Cape of Good Hope, the Spanish Main, to India and China, to the North of Europe, flocked to it to make it their headquarters. And old-timers love to tell that, in their boyhood, old-timers of that period loved to tell them, that in those early days of American commerce the skillful captains of the ships would beat in under full sail, without assistance, up to these very wharves.

The general district adjacent to these old-time wharves is mostly given over to the modern, but here and there are still to be seen quaint roof lines, and old-fashioned gables, and odd street-corner lines, reminiscent of the days that have gone. There is considerable, in fact, to remind one of old-time business London, including the many narrow passages and alley-ways that go diving here and there among the buildings. Not far away, too, is Fort Hill Park, a level space, grassed and sparsely-treed, in the heart of modern business buildings, and retaining the circular shape remindful of its past: for here in early days rose a hill a hundred feet in height, and where it was cut partly down its slopes were covered with fashionable homes—Gilbert Stuart chose his residence here—and at length it was entirely leveled into its present simple form.

Up a little distance from the waterside, on Custom House Street, is the old Custom House of Boston, sadly altered in looks from its early days, shorn of all distinction, and now showing a front of extraordinary plainness, with a sign denoting that it is a "Boarding



## FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE

and Baiting Stable"—the "baiting" being itself a queer reminder of a vanished time.

The old Custom House building is worth while making the few minutes' necessary pilgrimage to see, for here the collector of the port was Bancroft the historian, and one of his assistants was a certain young man of the name of Hawthorne! Bancroft had been attracted by some of Hawthorne's early short stories, and for that reason had offered him a position here.

Hawthorne was rather bored by the work; he was gauger and weigher, but does not seem to have given to the duties of these humble offices the hard work that a certain other writer, named Robert Burns, devoted to similar duties. In fact, Hawthorne seems always to have considered public office a rather tiresome sort of thing to attend to, in spite of the fact that it gave certain financial advantages not to be scorned by novelists. I have somewhere read his own description of his work here in Boston, and he seemed to find the heat and the flies of the waterside most unpleasant; with nothing of offsetting pleasantness. Boston, at that time, had not discovered him—his recognition had been very slight.

Somewhere I have read a brief description of him at this time, and it mentioned the delightful fact, which at once sets Hawthorne before us as a likable and very human man, that he loved to follow brass bands! Which amusing habit doubtless explains why, over in England, he notes in his journal that he had just seen march by the regiment of which George Washington was once enrolled as an officer!

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Close by this old building—for one continually sees how near together are most of the important or interesting things in Boston—is the new Custom House, an extremely notable structure, towering up to the height of 498 feet above the sidewalk; and the building does literally tower, for it may be said to be all tower! Years ago, a dignified structure, with pillared fronts, was built, in the form of a Greek cross, to replace the old building of Bancroft and Hawthorne, but the business of the city gradually outgrew it, and an appropriation was made by Congress for larger quarters. Real estate, however, had so gone up in price in Boston that the appropriation was not sufficient to buy land as well as to put up a building, and so the expedient was hit upon of running up the building itself into the air! The pillared fronts, with their thirty-two great Doric columns, still remain, but the entire center has risen, splendidly dominating in its immense height, making a tower which, though not quite beautiful, can be seen for miles in all directions. The city of Boston forbids the erection of any building within its limits higher than 125 feet, but the United States, taking advantage of the fact that it owns as a National Government the land upon which any of its public buildings stands, simply ignored the Boston restriction and went right ahead with this higher tower. And the people of Boston, themselves, are not displeased, although this was done in spite of them; in fact, they say that it gives a beacon-like effect to the city which rather matches the generally desired tone. At the same time, it fits in with the beacon idea of the early days, and

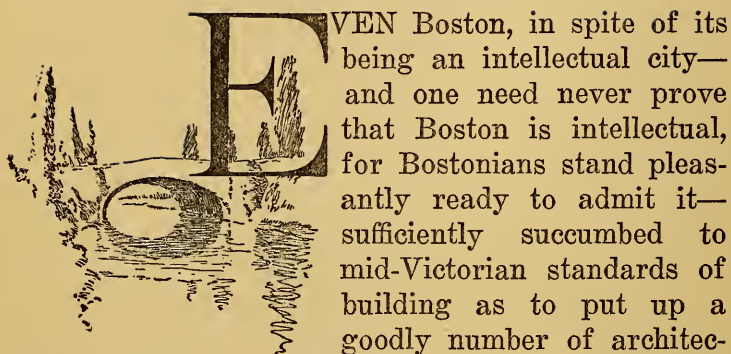
## FANEUIL HALL AND THE WATERSIDE

the fact that old Boston of England is also dominated by a tower which can be plainly seen for miles and miles across the fenland does certainly add to the sense of appropriateness. And that the Custom House stands so supreme over everything else in Boston, that it so dominates, is but natural after all—for in Boston it is natural for Custom to dominate!



## CHAPTER XIII

### THE STREETS OF BOSTON



VEN Boston, in spite of its being an intellectual city—and one need never prove that Boston is intellectual, for Bostonians stand pleasantly ready to admit it—sufficiently succumbed to mid-Victorian standards of building as to put up a goodly number of architectural ineptitudes, one of the sad examples being the Post-Office, which was so highly thought of at the time of its construction as to draw such encomiums as the following from an intelligent observer of about 1880: “Its style of architecture is grand in the extreme. It is a building of elegant finish. Its roof is an elaboration of Louvre and Mansard styles.” Really, beyond this nothing need be said. Yet this building points out the irony of fate, for in its granite prodigiousness it did a vastly better thing for Boston than many a more beautiful building would have done, for it stood as an absolute barrier in the great fire of 1872, completely stopping the

## THE STREETS OF BOSTON

frightful rush of flames in its direction; without this unbeautiful building the terrible record of 767 buildings burned, 67 acres swept over, and a money loss of seventy-five millions, would have been vastly worse.

That fire destroyed many a picturesque landmark, but the city still retains the old-time interest that comes from narrow and crooked streets. "The street called Straight" was certainly not a Boston street. In its whimsical complexity, the city is still as notable as when the Marquis de Chastellux wrote that he thought this feature exemplified "*la liberté*."

In the old section of the city there are still to be found not only crooked streets and unexpected angles but great numbers of narrow passages and blind ways, and there are little court-yards and streets that end in stone steps—all giving a highly satisfying sense of the olden days, for it is mainly on account of the olden days that one likes to come to Boston. One long slit of a passage, nearly six feet wide, running close between business blocks, is an "avenue," and I know it is an avenue because there is a sign on it to that effect, although otherwise I should never have suspected it of bearing such a large title. One can burrow across much of the old city through narrow passages, and here and there it is not only the metaphorical burrowing of narrow ways, but the literal burrowing of some public passage through and under some pile of buildings. One may even find extraordinarily narrow passages in such a comparatively new section as between West and Temple Streets and Temple and Winter; and one may follow narrow ways, one after another,



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

from the Granary to Faneuil Hall, and in many another place. Of no other American city could one say, as Holmes said of Boston, that he used to "bore" through it, knowing it as the old inhabitant of a Cheshire knows his cheese; and "bore" is precisely the right word. Some of the passages are so narrow that, standing in the middle, one may put an elbow against each wall. And these network passages are not back-ways for refuse and ashes, but are steadily and freely used by men and women as public pathways and shortcuts.

After all, as to Boston streets in general, one remembers that it has finely been said that, although the city is full of crooked little streets, it has opened and kept open more turnpikes that lead straight to free thought, free speech and free deeds than has any other city.

The street pavements, one regrets to notice, are likely to be rough and the sidewalks narrow, and in muddy weather the result is what would naturally be expected from such a combination, for in no other city have I noticed such splashing of house fronts and store windows with mud as in some parts of Boston. In the medieval streets in old European cities conditions are the same except that there is little traffic to speak of. Had Macaulay ever been in America one would have taken it for granted that the inspiration of his lines, telling that to the highest turret tops was dashed the yellow foam, came right from Boston. And the motorist must know his Boston exceptionally well to be able to make his way about on streets whose

## THE STREETS OF BOSTON

pavement is even measurably smooth. The cobbles at the sides of the Beacon Hill streets are obviously excellent as checks to sliding in slippery weather, but the cobbles in other parts of the city are not so understandable, and the holes and roughnesses that have nothing to do with cobbles are understandable even less. By "cobbles," it may be added, is meant not merely the rough Belgian blocks which are to be found here and there in Boston as in other cities, but round-top beach stones, little boulders, extremely uneven in surface and polished by the hoofs of many generations of horses. But there are splendid parkway roads in Boston, and some splendidly smooth roads leading out to some of the suburbs; altogether, Boston has some of the very best and some of the very worst roads that I have ever seen in a city. And frequently, on account of inefficient street-cleaning, there is achieved an incredible dustiness.

The hand-organ is still a common survival in Boston streets, and there are also survivals of street cries, in at least the older and still American parts of the city, of a kind that have nearly vanished from most other large cities; and these cries quite fulfill the requisite of being practically unintelligible except to the ear of custom. Some one wishing to rival the familiar prints of "Old London Cries" might still get out a series of "Boston Cries" and date it in the twentieth century. The humble soapgrease man still goes about with greasy cart and gives his humble soapgrease cry; the strident call of the eager fishman is a familiar possession of the city, though within my own

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

memory the conch-shell of the mackerel man has vanished; the varied cries of the men with fruit still rend the air, and these men have usually carts, with horses, which they drive by at a perpetual quickened walk, and the insistent and urgent voices seem to declare that the fruit must be bought instantly; perhaps the iceman is the best of all, for he wails and trails his words with a wonderful, lengthening "ee-ice," with a poignant accenting of the final note; and, as I write, one seems even more interesting than the iceman, for I hear a cry that is not only a veritable survival of the past, but one which has quite disappeared, so far as I know, from other cities—the cry of the ragman, going along with his bag over his shoulder and his scale in his hand, with his quietly murmuring cry of "Rags, an' ol' clothes"!

And in line with the street cries of Boston is a street sound that is curiously remarkable—the sound of bells that are strung on horses drawing the more primitive kinds of delivery wagon, or tied directly on the wagon thills. I do not remember any other American city where horses or wagons are belled. Nor do I refer to sleighbells, which are a different matter altogether. I mean bells that go ringing or jangling as the four-wheeled vehicles move through the streets; and it gives a most odd effect. The custom probably began as a measure of safety in approaching the frequent intersections of the narrow streets; for the same reason that the gondola men of Venice utter their long-drawn-out warning cry as they approach the intersections of the narrow canals.

## THE STREETS OF BOSTON

Sleighbells in winter are common; indeed, Boston is very much of a winter city, as is shown by the swift appearance of sleighs and bob-sleds after a snow, the swift handling of the snow-shoveling problem, the myriad little avalanches from the sloping roofs when a thaw comes, the skating on the Charles and on the lake in the Public Garden and on the pond in the Common, and the free and untrammelled coasting of boys and girls down the paths and the hill-slopes of the Common. And conservative ladies who still avoid limousines and pin their social faith to carriages—the “kerridges” of Holmes, with a “pole and a pair”—have the coupé top detached from the wheels and slung on an iron frame, with graceful runners, and, thus vehicularly equipped, sleigh forth in undisturbed exclusiveness to make their afternoon calls.

It so happens that I have rarely noticed a policeman upon the Common, though on inquiry I have learned that always there is supposedly a detail of two policemen there; perhaps it is only a fancy, that the general sense of freedom as to the Common keeps it unwatched ground. It seems quite unwatched, even when there is skating on the big pond before it has frozen strongly, and when, after freezing and melting, there are holes in the ice and gaps of black water along the edges. I one day asked a policeman on Tremont Street about this, for I was accustomed to see in other cities the red ball and supervision, for skating, but instead of saying that the water was not deep enough to be dangerous except for a cold wetting, he said thoughtfully: “Why, no—there ain’t no rule about it

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

—the boys go on when they want to.” Then a slow smile crept over his face. “I suppose it ain’t likely they will go near the holes,” he said. It really seems as if this freedom on the Common has come down without question since that pre-Revolutionary time when the boys of Boston went to the British General in command and complained of the spoiling of their slides and had their claim acknowledged.

The street signs of Boston are explanatory, expository, admonitory, advisory. I have even seen, but rarely, the blunt “Keep off,” but there is more likelihood of finding such a courteously suggestive sign as “Newly seeded ground.” And as Boston takes it for granted that the people within its gates wish everything to be reasonably done, you will see “Uncheck your horses on going up the hill,” or “Rest your horses”; and you will notice such advice as “Do not walk more than two abreast,” and “Do not stop in the middle of the sidewalk,” and “Do not block the crossings.”

A kind of sign, rather exceptionally rhadamanthine, is seen at some of the street intersections and bluntly commands “Do not enter here”; and several visitors have told me that they have actually gone clear around such blocks so as to enter at the other end, to see why it was that admittance was forbidden, and that not until then did they realize that Bostonians merely meant to say that it was a one-way street for vehicles, with no intended reference to pedestrians. And a smile is admissible when you see a stairway, leading down from a sidewalk, marked “To the Elevated”! In any



## THE STREETS OF BOSTON

other city Bostonians would see humor in calling a subway an elevated, even though it may chance after a while to lead to an elevated. Also, I have been directed in the suburbs to the "Subway," where there was only a stair to the elevated. And when you read, in a street car, that you are "forbidden to stand" on the front platform, and in the same car that you are "not allowed to stand" on the rear platform, you wonder just what fine distinction is implied.

The custom in Boston at some corners is to give not only the street names, but the number of the ward as well, and a visitor to the city told me that, arriving at night and starting out to explore the city the next morning, he at once noticed Ward II, Ward III, and so on, near his hotel and thought he must be in the vicinity of a great Boston hospital with out-lying hospital buildings. And an old Bostonian assures me that it was not a joke, but a fact, that a Boston library had a sign reading "Only low talk permitted in this room"—till the newspapers learned of it!

"Prepayment" cars are a feature of Boston, and you find yourself vaguely wondering about them until you see that they are but the "Pay as you enter" cars of other cities.

And all this in a city whose very street railway men will calmly refer you to "the next articulated car, sir," and which preens itself on such things as saying that gloves are always "cleansed" and never "cleaned"! which is remindful that the men of Boston do not wear gloves as freely as do the men of other large cities in the East; gloves are evidently looked

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

upon, by them, as meant for cold weather, and not until cold weather are they donned generally.

I have noticed that the police are a courteously helpful set of men, never too busy to answer questions. I have even smiled to see the traffic men at the busiest crossings stop to answer carefully and distinctly the questions of fluttered folk even while thronging motor cars come bearing down in threatening masses.

In the best retail shopping district, which corresponds with what used to be the "ladies' mile" in New York, there are many delightful specialty shops on streets just off the principal thoroughfares: little shops which make one think of London. There are lace-shops, linen-shops, hat-shops, tea-shops—the list might be extended indefinitely. The heavy percentage of candy-shops, with their attractive windows, is noticeable, and one finds himself thinking that this must be due to the influence of women—until he discovers that there is also a striking number of candy-shops down in the heart of the business district!

Boston must, also, be an intensely flower-loving city, judging from the frequency of gorgeous window displays of flowers and the great number of shops that sell not only cut flowers but bulbs, seeds and house-plants.

Ask a Philadelphian or a New Yorker to show you the nearest doctor and he looks at the nearest house! For doctors' signs are so common in those cities that you think it likely to see one at any window. But in Boston the doctors' signs are few and far between, and when found they are so small as to be not only

## THE STREETS OF BOSTON

inconspicuous but almost unreadable. It would seem as if the bigger a doctor's reputation the smaller his sign. And to a great extent doctors throng to office buildings.

The pharmacists, in distinction from the candy and soda people who also sell drugs, are even rarer in proportion than in other American cities.

Old-fashioned terms or phrases are preserved. The sign of "Lobsters and Musty Ale" is not infrequent, and it is still far from impossible to find a "Tap"; and if one is so old-fashioned as to drive into town with a horse he may still have it "baited," as old-fashioned announcements still have it, at old-fashioned places.

And there are still, in Boston, book-shops that look like book-shops, delightful book-shops that attract book-buyers and book-lovers; a type of shop that is passing, in some American cities, on account of the taking over of the book trade by department stores.

So sensitive is the Boston mind, in some respects, that no employee of any shop, or, in fact, any employee of any kind, is ever treated so harshly as to be "discharged"; and to be "fired" would be shudderingly impossible; here in Boston a dismissed employee has simply "got through." That is all. He has "got through." And with that delicate euphemism the incident and the conversation are delicately but finally closed. If, on the other hand, a man has resigned of his own free will, or has moved into a higher sphere of influence, that is another matter, and

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Bostonian pains are taken to make that fact clear. But in general, he has just "got through."

It is impossible to think of any street scene in Boston without thinking of the most Bostonian feature of all, the Boston bag. A plain leather bag it is, not much over a foot long and about one foot in height; it has something of the quality of a valise and something of the quality of a portfolio; it has a flat bottom and two leather handles and never closes with a lock but with a strap. It is used by all the men and women and girls and boys, it is used by youth and age, it is used in walking the streets, in shopping, in going to school, in going to business offices, it is carried in street cars and automobiles, it is used for business and for pleasure, it holds books, purchases of all sorts, skates, lunches and anything; it may even at times be empty, but it is none the less carried. No visitor who becomes fully impregnated with the Boston feeling ever leaves the city without carrying one away with him. It has long been said that the requisite possessions of every true Bostonian are a Boston bag, a subscription to the *Transcript* and a high moral purpose.

There is so much of the pleasant in the weather in Boston that I do not quite see why it is so abused by the citizens themselves. It is not altogether so good as in some American cities, but it is quite as good as in some others, even of such as have a better name for their weather. Yet one must admit, however reluctantly, that there is an east wind, which at times is highly disagreeable. It can have such fierce, ugly,

## THE STREETS OF BOSTON

persistent, tearing qualities that you feel as if on the bridge of a liner with all the Atlantic pulling at you. And it can blow like a proof of perpetual motion. It can be as raw and chill and wet, too, as a wind blowing straight off the Banks; and one begins to see that it is not necessarily blue blood that gives blue noses.

Although James Russell Lowell, Bostonian and Cambridgean that he was, gave Boston, with a subtlety that the city has never yet realized, its cruellest weather tap by his declaration that it is in June that "if ever" come perfect days, the perfect days are many in the course of a year and the really excellent days are many more. It seems as if Bostonians love to find fault with their weather just as the people of Edinburgh like to find fault with theirs, as a sort of relief to wind-strained nerves, but without meaning to be taken too literally. And yet, I remember a recent September in which, for several days, some of the Boston public schools were closed on account of the oppressive heat, only to be closed for excessive cold the very week after.

There are more drunken men to be met on Boston streets than one sees in other cities, and many of them are well dressed; and perhaps the frequency of the sight indicates that the police do not think it necessary to be too severe with men who are uncomfortably tacking and taking their way home. But at least it is clear that the law which takes away the screens from bars, and thus puts them in public view, so that the passing public, friends or relatives or employers, may see any man who takes a drink, does not act as a deterrent;



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

indeed, the crowded condition of the bars in general throughout the city shows that the enforced publicity has not had any prohibitive effect.

The parkways of Boston, and especially what may be called the incidental parkways, are thoroughly admirable; and by incidental parkways I mean the narrow strips, boulevarded and parked for long distances, as along the Back Bay and out for miles through the Fenway and beyond, where the bordering land is used freely for homes, and just as much for the charming homes of people of moderate means as for those of the wealthy.

There are superb roadways, running through beautiful park-land, far out into the country outside of Boston, such roads being the result of the combined and coördinated plans of State and city and townships. I well remember such a road, leading out through Commonwealth Avenue and Brookline, and thence on to the westward toward Weston, through a lovely natural landscape, admirably beautified by art. There were groups of white birches beside the road, and there were glimpses of little lakes, and the trees were rich in the splendor of their autumn foliage, the yellow maples, the scarlet sumac, the oaks with their leaves of splendid bronze. Country clubs seemed to hover, here and there, along the border, and, almost hidden by trees, I noticed many a home. Other roads now and then led off enticingly, and there were open glades, tree foliaged, and splendid groups of massed oaks, and veritable old warriors of pines. It is a rolling country, part hills and part levels, and now and

## THE STREETS OF BOSTON

then there were special bits of beauty where a stream was crossed and where one would catch glimpses of canoes and of pretty girls paddling in blazers of yellow or purple or green.

And this road is only one of a number of perfectly oiled roads, tar-bound and hard, radiating away from the city's center. One such road leads to the admirably conceived Arnold Arboretum, established nearly half a century ago, through the bequest of one hundred thousand dollars, by James Arnold of New Bedford, for the growth and exhibition of every kind of tree that can be grown in the New England climate. The Arboretum occupies over two hundred acres, and is a beautiful and most interesting park, finely roaded and footpathed, and planted with a vast variety of trees and shrubs, all plainly marked.

One of the finest excursions, by motor or train or trolley, is to Wellesley; for the Elizabethan college buildings, newly erected since a fire, are positively beautiful in their setting of water and rolling land and ancient pines; and the atmosphere is one of sweet and scholarly serenity.

The parks of Boston, and the parkway boulevards, have not as yet been merged, as in Chicago, in a comprehensively connected system, yet the results thus far are highly satisfactory. I remember, among other roads, the Revere Beach Parkway, a superb boulevard that leads off towards Lynn and Salem; curving out from Charlestown, and running beside the broad blue bay and the wide white beach that are held within the protecting arm of Nahant. Revere Beach, so

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

thronged with myriad pleasure seekers in summer, I recently saw in the loneliness of October, with its long line of coastwise buildings closed, and only two human figures in sight in the entire length and breadth of the beach, two girls, one redcoated and the other red-capped, moving prettily about.

And I went on through Lynn and Swampscott, along a rock-made road just a little higher than the sweeping sandy curve beside it, and there I saw myriad boats floating in the water, or lying on the sloping sand, and the water was all alive and glittering under a cloudless sky; and a man in yellow oilskins was leading a white horse that was drawing a green boat, mounted on low gray wheels, toward the blue water.



## CHAPTER XIV

### IN THE OLD NORTH END



FROM the old North End, the oldest part of the city, most of the vestiges of early American life have disappeared. There are two extremely interesting old buildings, and there is Copp's Hill, but in regard to the rest of the locality it is not a jest, but a very practical fact, to say that the sights of the North End are mostly sites.

Here and there, tucked away, are a doorway, a pillar, an ancient gable, but even such reminders are few. However, the part of the city maintains strikingly the old Boston characteristic of narrow streets, leading in odd lines, and the two ancient buildings that remain are unusually ancient and of unusual interest.

The North End has become Italian. It is true that Boston, on the whole, retains the general atmosphere of an American city, but the entire North End is foreign, and Salem Street might as well be called the Via Tribunali.

It was many years ago that the descendants of the original Americans disappeared from the North End, but for a long time afterwards a great many of the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

old-time houses remained, and the entire district was so taken over by Hebrews that, until recent years, the typical resident was that college-song celebrity, sung into American fame, whose "name was Solomon Levy, with his store on Salem Street." Gradually the Italians have come into complete possession, and unattractive tenements have been erected for them, to take the place of the houses of the past.

The old church on Salem Street, the Chiesa del Cristo, is of fascinating interest. The name is not remindful of things American, and so it may be explained that, although the Italian name has really been placed out in front of the church to attract the neighborhood dwellers, the good old American name is also there; for it is the Church of Christ, the famous Old North Church, a bravely notable church, the oldest of all the churches of Boston. But it somewhat startles an American to find Christ Church translated into Chiesa del Cristo, with "Servizio Divino," "Scuola Domenicati," and "Tutti sono invitata," added.

But you enter the church and at once you are back in the far-distant American past, for the church has stood here on the slope of Copp's Hill since 1723, and its interior, so fair and white, so pilastered and paneled in beauty, is full of the very atmosphere of early days. So white, indeed, is the interior, that the only touches of color are in the rose silk about the altar and the organ gallery, and the color of rose in the lining of the pews, this diffused presence of rose giving just the needed softening touch. But I ought not to forget another touch of color: an American flag, at



## IN THE OLD NORTH END

one end of the church—a pleasant thing to see in this old American and now Italian neighborhood.

The square box pews, the high and isolated pulpit, reached by its bending stair, the double row of white columns, the great brass candelabra of such excellent simplicity in design—all is restful, complete, well cared for, in every respect satisfactory.

The exceedingly sweet chimes are of eight bells, placed here in 1744, and upon one of them the proud statement is lettered: "We are the first ring of bells cast for the British Empire in North America." And when they ring out the old-time hymns familiar to the English-speaking races, here in the now foreign-speaking region, as they do on Sunday afternoons, one may fancy that it is with a sort of sweet pathos, as if hoping that some American will hear.

There are many details of interest. The old clock in front of the organ has ticked there for almost a century and a half. Here is a pew set apart, so the old inscription has it, for the use of the "Gentlemen of the Bay of Honduras"—and one learns that this pew was long ago thus honorably set apart in recognition of the building of the spire of the church by the Honduras merchants of 1740. The present spire, above the tower, is not the original one, which blew down over a hundred years ago, but the spire that we now see, delicate and strong and graceful as it is, was put up by the architect to whom Boston owes much, Bulfinch, who carefully reproduced it from the original drawings. In front of the organ are four charming little figures of cherubim, carved figures of women

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

perched prettily, with trumpets at their lips, standing there as they have stood since the long-past pre-Revolutionary days when they were captured by an English privateer from a French ship.

It is a place to wander about in and notice one interesting thing after another. Here, for example, is a tablet in memory of Reverend Mather Byles, Jr., who was rector here from 1768 to 1775, one of the many Church of England clergymen who fled in the early days of the Revolution to New Brunswick or Nova Scotia, which were still loyal British possessions. And there is a tablet to the memory of Major John Pitcairn, he who at Concord, according to the spirited tradition, stirred his rum with his finger and said that thus he would stir the blood of the Americans before night, but whose bravery could not save the English forces from their running defeat from Concord back to Boston. He was mortally wounded a few weeks later on Bunker Hill. Likely enough General Gage, witnessing the battle from the very tower of this old church, saw him carried by his son from the hillside down to the boats, where the young man kissed him a last farewell and returned to duty—one of the extremely dramatic touches in American history, and one which so impressed General Burgoyne that he spoke of what a wonderful scene it would make in a play.

Grim old vaults extend beneath the entire church, but admittance is now forbidden to visitors. I went through, years ago, with a garrulous old sexton, now long since dead, who loved the old inscriptions and

## IN THE OLD NORTH END

loved to talk of the happenings in the dark backward and abysm of time, and I remember how he pointed out, with curious pride, the vaults of the poor of the parish in the place of honor beneath the very altar, and he deciphered for me ancient, rusted inscriptions telling of lords and ladies who had lain beneath the church—inscriptions that were, to the imagination, veritable volumes of romance!—and he showed me an open charnel vault, down in those black depths, where whitening bones lay in lidless coffins.

Many of the New England rectors, fleeing from the Revolution, carried the ecclesiastical silver of their churches with them, but Rector Byles did not follow that unfortunate example, and thus the Old North Church still owns its old silver, although it has deposited it, for safe keeping and so that it may be seen under safe conditions, with the Museum of Fine Arts. And it is a proud possession, for the splendid tall flagons, the paten, the bowls, the plates, make in all the most notable collection of old ecclesiastical silver in New England, and have come down with memories of wealthy donors, of merchants, of Colonial rulers, even of royalty.

The church still proudly holds its old vellum-covered books, one of the most picturesque collections in America; and there is a very early bust of Washington, believed to be the first monument to Washington to be set up anywhere in America; in recent years the famous name of Houdon has been attached to this, but it is not quite like Houdon's work, and it was probably made by some forgotten artist who was momentarily

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

inspired by such a mighty subject as Washington.

There is a two-centuries-old, mahogany, bandy-legged armchair in the chancel, so fine in shape, so truly glorious a specimen of chairmaking, as fitly to be compared with the best old armchairs of America—William Penn's, the high-backed Chippendale of the first officer of Congress, the Jacobean armchair of Concord, the Elder's chair of Plymouth. One places this chair of Christ Church near the head of the list. The altar table is also contemporaneous with the church itself and is of solid, heavy oak. In a room behind the chancel there is also some extremely pleasing old furniture, for there are a desk of oak and a gate-legged table, and an ancient chair of Queen Anne design, fine and notable.

You go forth again into Salem Street, and you have been so deeply impregnated with the spirit of the past that you can glance up, with a pleasure that is unalloyed by the swarming foreign life, at the fine proportions of this old edifice, which has stood here so beautifully and so long. Then again comes the sense that this has become a Naples, but without the picturesqueness of Naples: without the color, the pleasant intimacies, the costumes, the flowers, the goats, of that massed and ancient city: and you feel angered that Italian boys crowd about you so vociferously, offering themselves as guides to the ancient American graves on Copp's Hill.

Up on the front of the church is a tablet telling that from this tower were hung the signal lanterns of Paul Revere; and as one reads this the mind is filled with

## IN THE OLD NORTH END

a rush of romantic memories. For that ride of Paul Revere's was so wonderful a thing! And it is not fiction, romantic though it sounds, but a veritable fact. Revere did not, so it happened, see the lanterns himself, but friends were on the lookout and told him that the lights showed, and off he went galloping on his splendid errand. Even the most sluggish blood must thrill at such a story.

And the tale itself would be none the less inspiring even if, as some have believed, it was from the tower of another North Church that the lights were flashed, instead of from this, for it is the splendid story itself that matters; the story of how Paul Revere was silently rowed to the Charlestown shore, past the *Somerset*, British man-of-war, and the other ships of the British fleet, the story of the flashing out of the lights, and of Revere's bravely galloping off through the Middlesex hamlets and farms and telling of the British march: "A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door, and a word that shall echo forevermore"—It is a fine thing for our country to possess a tale so splendidly romantic and so nobly true.

The other North Church, for which some claim has been made, stood in North Square, not far from here, and was torn down by the British for firewood in the course of the siege of Boston. Paul Revere himself, writing years after the close of the Revolution, says the signals were shown on the "North Church." He does not say, "the North Church that was destroyed," and therefore should be taken to mean the church known by all as the North Church at the time he wrote



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

—the church still standing to-day. The present church fits the description that the lanterned church “rose above the graves on the hill,” and the situation is precisely such as would be chosen for signaling across the water; so there is no good reason to doubt its being the very building, thus leaving to the noble story a noble existent setting.

Copp’s Hill Burying-Ground, near the Old North Church, the metaphorical “night encampment on the hill,” was literally a camp, for British soldiers, during the siege, and its oldest portion became a cemetery at least as long ago as 1660.

The hill is not so high as it originally was, having been greatly altered in appearance by the grading of adjacent streets and the building of embankments, and also by the erection of tenements that huddle against the cemetery; and tenement dwellers actually string their clothes-lines, with their variegated burdens, not only beside the graveyard but actually across parts of it. And cats, mostly the big yellow ones, roam sedately about, yet somehow without the grim suggestiveness that Stevenson thought he discerned in the cemetery cats of Edinburgh.

Copp’s Hill is particularly the burying-ground of the Mather family, including Cotton and Increase, and the Mather tomb is still preserved; but as to the graves of most of the other early Americans buried here there is scarcely any certainty as to precise location or date, for many of the stones have been freely changed about, and many have had the dates chipped and even altered; many were even carried away and, when re-

## IN THE OLD NORTH END

covered, were set back at random. And none of this vandalism can be charged to foreigners. It was done before the influx of either Hebrews or foreigners, by Americans who saw humor in changing dates and shifting stones, and others who utilitarianly recognized in these stones material for doorsteps, window-sills and chimneys. Still, this burying-ground stands notably, even though conglomeratedly, for early Boston.

I found it a quiet place in spite of the tenement surroundings, and with a marked effect of crowded mortality, which is doubtless owing, in some degree, to the effect of crowded life in the streets and tenements adjacent. The place is a grassy knoll, studded with stones and with smallish trees, and the ground is a-flutter with little American flags fastened on low upright iron rods, it being not precisely apparent which graves these flags mark, although one naturally supposes that they are offerings of Decoration Day.

Down below, seen over rooftops and down narrow streets, is the harbor, and on the height beyond, over in Charlestown, towers the lofty monument of Bunker Hill. In the harbor, the other day, there lay at anchor, with felicity of position, several warships, just where the English warships were at anchor when Paul Revere was rowed by.

Always in this vicinity the mind goes back to Paul Revere. And it is pleasant to know that the little building on North Square which was his home for many years, not many blocks away from the Old North Church, has been preserved, although it is al-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

most lost among the Italian shops and tenements of the district. It is a small building with an over-hanging second story, a high sloping roof, and the hugest of chimneys. And if it has been somewhat over-restored outside and in, with more of diamond panes than Revere himself would have used, still, it is such a satisfaction to see it kept at all that one does not like to feel critical about it. It was a very old house when Revere bought it, before the Revolution, and, as a gauge of values in those days, it may be mentioned that he paid for it, in cash, 213 pounds 6 shillings and 8 pence, and that he also gave a mortgage for 160 pounds. It was from the very windows of this house, even though now over-diamonded, that he showed those transparencies of the Boston Massacre that brought all Boston here, aflame with excitement.

The boldness of Paul Revere, his bluntness, his daring, his physical energy, ought to have won him high place in public affairs. He was one of the most trusted "Sons of Liberty," from as early as 1765; as confidential messenger he was entrusted with important communications from prominent leaders of Boston, such as Adams and Hancock, to members of the Provincial Congress and the Continental Congress; several months before Lexington, in December of 1774, he rode, for the Boston Committee of Safety, to the Committee of Safety at Portsmouth, notifying them that the English had prohibited importations of powder and munitions, and that a large garrison had been ordered to Fort William and Mary, whereupon, in consequence of this message, some four hundred

## IN THE OLD NORTH END

men were hurried by the Portsmouth Committee to the fort, where they temporarily made prisoners of the captain and his handful of soldiers, and went off with some ninety-seven kegs of powder and a quantity of small arms, which, thus captured, were afterwards used to vast advantage on Bunker Hill.

As an artist, Revere made prints, and copper-plate engravings, of pictures of ante-Revolutionary events, which were sent out broadcast and made wide and successful appeals to patriotism. He was forty years old when the Revolution began; a man well tested and trusted; a man who had given hostages to fortune, too, for by his first wife he had eight children, and he had married a second, who in time was to offer him a like total of eight!

He was a silversmith of rare skill, and made, in solid silver, delicate ladles, exquisite teaspoons, stately flagons, rotund mugs, and salts, and braziers, and sugar-tongs—all with skill and beauty and propriety; not crude things, but exquisite things; silver as exquisite as was made in England in that period of distinctly fine taste. And examples of his art are still preserved, and vastly prized, in all the shapes named.

Paul Revere was one of those men who can do anything and do it well. He even turned his attention to dentistry in the early days when dentistry was barely beginning to be a science, and there is still extant one of his advertisements of 1768, reading:

“Whereas, many Persons are so unfortunate as to lose their Fore-Teeth by Accident, and otherways, to

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

their great Detriment, not only in Looks, but speaking both in Public and Private:—This is to inform all such, that they may have them re-placed with artificial Ones, that looks as well as the Natural, and answers the End of Speaking to all Intents, by Paul Revere.”

When, quite a while after Bunker Hill, it was desired to remove the body of General Warren from its first resting-place, it was Paul Revere who identified it by an artificial tooth and the wire he had used to fasten it in.

Revere also engraved much of the Revolutionary money. Nor does the list of his varied activities end here, for he also made the carved wood frames for many of Copley’s paintings—and beautiful frames they are!

Paul Revere, bold and shrewd as he was, seems to have been the only man who distrusted that Bostonian who was the predecessor of Benedict Arnold, Doctor Benjamin Church. Church was in the confidence of the early patriots, and, after taking part in conferences, used to walk over to the British and betray all that was being planned. Church was lucky to escape with banishment when his treachery came to light.

In spite of boldness and shrewdness and loyalty, Revere had no appreciative standing in Boston. He was always termed a mechanic, and was looked on rather patronizingly. When the Revolutionary War actually came, he expected opportunity for service, but practically no notice was taken of him. Although Washington knew him, it was slightly, as a local man who cleverly saw to the repair of some gun-wagons,



## IN THE OLD NORTH END

and so Revere was not offered a post with the Continental army, but was left to do duty for the local Massachusetts authorities, which gave him an inactive life, for, after the early days, the War remained in the Central and Southern Colonies. We hear of him as head of a court-martial, dealing out minor sentences such as riding on the wooden horse as a punishment for playing cards on the Sabbath. We hear of him as governor of Castle William (Castle Island) in Boston Harbor, and see him mounting there the guns from the wrecked *Somerset*—what thoughts must have come to him as he remembered the night when he rowed past her dark sides! We read of him as a subordinate member of the poorly planned and more poorly executed Penobscot expedition.

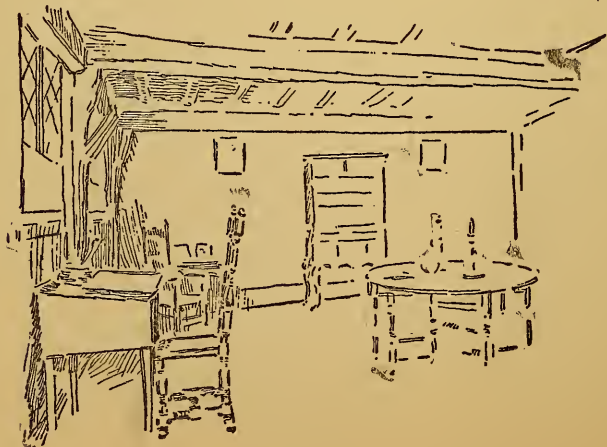
He has left on record that he felt, bitterly, that those who knew him best, those he thought his friends, took no notice of him. And, indeed, a word from Hancock or John Adams or Samuel Adams to either Washington or Anthony Wayne, would have given them an admirable, capable soldier and would have given Revere the chance he wanted; but Hancock and the Adamses, wise and patriotic though they were, were not themselves men of action, and were too quiet in personal tastes to appreciate the merits of vivid personal courage. And so, toward the end of the war, Revere went back to private life and work again, a disappointed man.

After the war was over he asked to be Master of the Mint—and what honor and distinction he, with his skill and artistic feeling, would have given it! But

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

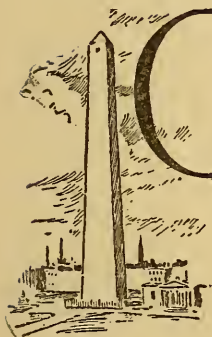
his Boston friends in power found it politically inconvenient to urge his claims and his ability upon Congress, and thus the Mint missed a superb master and Revere continued a private citizen. He established a brass foundry and furnished the brass and copper work for the splendid *Old Ironsides*, and received for it, it is curious to know, the sum of \$3,820.33. He rolled sheets of copper for the dome of the State House on Beacon Hill. And when Governor Samuel Adams, in 1795, laid the corner stone of the State House, his first assistant was "the Most Worshipful Paul Revere, Grand Master"; and, as Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, he signed the address from the Masons to George Washington, the Mason, when he left the Presidency.

And so it is interesting to see preserved, here in this ancient quarter of Boston, the little ancient house that was for many years the home of that remarkable man.



## CHAPTER XV

### DOWN WAPPING STREET AND UP BUNKER HILL



VER in that old part of Boston still known as Charlestown, there is a little quaint and wavering street, shabby and irregular; it is a street that arouses an odd sense of interest, and the interest is added to by the signs which you read in the windows of the shabby little shops. "Everything from a needle to an anchor"; "Why get wet when a raincoat is only \$1.25?"; "Lockers to let"; and you see, also, that such simple joys are provided as white shoes, gum, tobacco, and candy, and that there are to be had not only "Yokahoma Eats" but also "Honolulu Lunch." I noticed, also, a sign "Don't risk your money; buy a leg-belt"—a leg-belt; so that's the way, is it, that sailors keep their money!

This wavering, savory little street is Wapping Street, and not only in its name is it delightfully reminiscent of waterside London, but in its aspect; and it is curiously fitting that this street should be reminiscent of something that is English, for it leads to the gate of the Charlestown Navy Yard, and where

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

the Navy Yard is now the English landed for their attack on Bunker Hill.

There are spaciousness and quiet inside of the grounds of the Navy Yard, and flowers and gardens and a pergola; and a bugle sounds through the air, and in a little while a band is playing, and capable-looking officers and men walk spiritedly about, and there are long machine shops and quarters, and here and there is some old cannon or figurehead from some ship of the past, and there is the fine, old-fashioned home of the commandant, with its cream-colored brick; in fact, all the brick hereabouts is cream-colored, and Uncle Sam is very generous with paint.

At the piers, or out on the open water, warships, little or big, lie moored, and near the very heart of it all is the famous frigate *Constitution*, lovingly known as *Old Ironsides*.

She is black and white, in her glory of masts and spars and myriad ropes. From her curving prow to the quaint-shaped cabin at the stern, her lines are of the handsomest. She is graceful and strong, she is trim and capable and proud, and her guns, in their long double lines, are close together, giving a realizing sense of the meaning of the old word "broadside." One is apt to forget that such a warship carried hundreds of fighters and scores of cannon.

The ship is freely open to visitors, and one cannot but be a better American for going aboard and actually treading its decks; one cannot but feel a surge of patriotism when going about on this old ship that made such glorious history.

## WAPPING STREET AND BUNKER HILL

It was well on toward a century ago, in 1830, that some Government official gave orders to have the ship broken up and sold for junk; and the entire nation was shocked when the news was learned, for *Old Ironsides* had won a place very close to all hearts. And a young man, burning with the indignation that all were feeling, put that fiery feeling into fiery words:

“Ay, tear her tattered ensign down!  
Long has it waved on high,  
And many an eye has danced to see  
That banner in the sky!”

Thus the lines began, and they went on gloriously to the demand that rather than break up and sell the splendid ship they

“Nail to the mast her holy flag,  
Set every threadbare sail,  
And give her to the god of storms,  
The lightning and the gale!”

After that there was no more talk of breaking up *Old Ironsides*. With these lines, young Oliver Wendell Holmes had done a proud service for his country, and the ship was repaired and painted, to be kept as a national possession, and the Government ever since then has continued to paint and furbish her, and she is still a national heritage. A few years ago, as she was said to be going to pieces at her pier, some navy officer proposed that she be towed out to sea, not to be given the glorious end that Holmes pictured as being better than tearing up for junk, but to be a



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

floating target for battleships and sunk for gunners' practice! But Congress was at once so overwhelmed with protests that it was decided still to keep the gallant old ship.

The houses of Charlestown rise crowdedly behind the line of the Navy Yard, and above and beyond the confusion of roofs one sees the upper part of a tall stone shaft, bare and dignified in its fine simplicity. And no American can look at that monument and be entirely unmoved, for it marks the place where was fought the most representatively American of all battles, that of Bunker Hill.

And here, from the Navy Yard, where the British troops landed long before there was any Navy Yard, we follow up the hill; only we do not go in a practically direct line, as the British soldiers did, but, after walking back through queer little Wapping Street, go by trolley, zigzaggingly, through rather commonplace streets to the summit. There is nothing in Charlestown that offers interest except the Navy Yard and the monument; the town was set on fire and burned by the British at the time of the battle—no doubt a military necessity—and the rebuilt portion, as well as the great spaces that were bare in Revolutionary days and have since been built over, have never drawn either wealth or an interesting kind of architecture. But one thinks little of such considerations as these in the presence of Bunker Hill Monument.

A strange battle, that of Bunker Hill! On the American side there were no uniforms and there was no flag! There was really not even a leader, for no

## WAPPING STREET AND BUNKER HILL

one general was absolutely in command. The Americans had come together in a sort of neighborly gathering, for the mutual good, and officers and men were all fully in accord with one another. But although it may be said to have been a neighborly New England gathering, there was no lack of military skill and no lack of discipline. And the British themselves admitted afterwards that there was no lack of the best fighting qualities.

And the spectators outnumbered the fighters! That strange fact makes the battle unique among the great battles of the world. For not only did General Gage and other officers watch the fight from the tower of the old North Church, but every high point of land, every roof and window that had an outlook over the water, was crowded with the people of Boston, sympathizers with either Royalty or Republicanism, watching the fight with intense or even frantic interest. They saw the Americans calmly walk about and calmly settle behind the hastily made breastwork, preparing for the assault. They saw the red-coats go steadily up the hill. They watched with straining interest as the breastwork was neared—Would the Americans run?—And then came the flash of rifles and the crackling roar of sound and the red-coats wavered and recoiled, and officers furiously tried to encourage and hold their men; but in vain, for down the hill the red-coats ran, leaving the slope dotted thick with the dead and wounded. What a sight for the men and women and children who watched all this with terrified interest! Then again the calm preparation, again a brave at-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

tack, again a withering fire and a huddled retreat down the hill.

Well, we all know that at length the British won, and that, in full sight of the Boston spectators, almost all of whom had friends or kinsmen among the fighters, the Americans fell back with glory. "The defense was well conceived and obstinately maintained," writes the clear-eyed Burgoyne, one of the British major-generals in Boston, who had been given charge of some desultory cannonading. "The retreat was no flight," he writes, English general though he was; "it was even covered with bravery and military skill." (He was afterwards to learn, still more intimately, about American bravery and military skill!) And the first question of General Washington, not yet in New England, when he heard of Bunker Hill, was the eager inquiry as to whether or not the militia had stood firm, and when he was told how superbly they had acted, he exclaimed, "Then the liberties of the country are safe!" And all this leads to the strangest consideration of all in regard to this battle, which is, that although it was an American defeat, it had all the essential elements of an American victory.

Charlestown is on a peninsula, and, from a strictly military point of view, there was nothing to be gained by the Americans in advancing to a position so untenable that the English, by so locating the warships as to cut off communication with the mainland, could have made their retreat impossible. Also, from a strictly military point of view, there was nothing to be gained by the British in making a direct attack upon

## WAPPING STREET AND BUNKER HILL

the American position in front. But both sides were keyed for a test of strength, both sides knew that the test must come sooner or later, and on both sides was the intense feeling that the sooner the better.

All the central part of the battle-field has been kept free from buildings, and they cluster modestly about the big, open, grass-covered space. And from the center of this space rises the monument, flawless in its stern dignity, massive in its strength. Without preliminary base, it rises from the ground; it is of blocks of New England granite and has a monolithic effect, lofty and tall. And the most eloquent man that New England has ever produced, the mighty orator who spoke at the laying of the corner-stone and at the completion of the monument, summed up its feeling and its influence with a massive simplicity equal to that of the monument itself:

“It is a plain shaft. It bears no inscriptions. But it looks, it looks, it speaks, to the full comprehension of every American mind, and the awakening of glowing enthusiasm in every American heart.”

It was among the most interesting features of the celebration of the monument's completion, in 1843, that thirteen survivors, of Bunker Hill or Lexington or Concord, were present to listen to Webster's oration, although that was sixty-eight years after those battles! It had seemed almost wonderful that quite a number of Bunker Hill veterans were present at the laying of the corner-stone in 1825, when Webster thrilled the vast assemblage before him with the words addressed to the survivors—the best known of all his

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

utterances—beginning “Venerable men, you have come down to us from a former generation!”

Another who was present in 1825 to listen to Webster was a certain Jean Paul Roch Ives Gilbert Motier, Marquis de Lafayette; and Boston still loves to tell that at a dinner given in the distinguished Frenchman's honor at the time of this visit, he emotionally joined in cheering some words laudatory of himself, through not quite catching that he was the subject of the eulogy; something, by the way, which would never have been noticed in France, and certainly not remembered for more than a minute, had some American general over there, from lack of full understanding of the language, joined in applause of himself.

It is well to remember in regard to Bunker Hill, that the British forces engaged in the attack numbered some two thousand men, and that the defenders were fewer, being in all only some fifteen hundred; and that the Americans lost about three hundred and fifty in killed, wounded and prisoners, whereas the English loss in killed and wounded was well over one thousand. I remember seeing, in some museum, a cotemporary pamphlet that was scattered throughout America, grimly itemizing that the English lost, in killed, 1 lieutenant-colonel, 4 majors, 11 captains, 13 lieutenants, 1 ensign, 102 sergeants and 100 corporals. No wonder Bunker Hill has been looked upon as the place where the British army faced the hottest fire of its history, considering the number engaged and the length of time that the actual firing lasted; and it was especially noticeable that the officers suffered, propor-



## WAPPING STREET AND BUNKER HILL

tionately, even more than the men, because most of the Americans were sharp-shooters and picked them off.

After the battle the British occupied the hill themselves, and kept soldiers there throughout the continuation of the siege; and General Washington never tried to take it away from them, knowing that its possession would have no particular bearing on the capture of the city, and that it would naturally fall into American hands again in good time.

The days of the siege were so tiresome to the British that they amused themselves by presenting plays of their own composition, in Faneuil Hall, and one of these plays was a farce which they called "The Blockade of Boston." The farce gave them huge enjoyment, for it caricatured Americans in general and American soldiers in particular, and presented a special caricature of General Washington himself, armed with a grotesque rusty sword and attended by a grotesque orderly. On a January night in 1776 the very building was rocking with the laughter of the men and their officers at this presentation, when a sergeant rushed into the hall; "The Yankees are attacking our works on Bunker Hill!" he cried. For a few moments there was an amazed silence. The men thought it a joke, and yet the sergeant's tone had a grim earnestness that they did not like. Then there came the sharp command of their general, who was present: "To your posts, men!" A cold chill seemed to fill the hall, and all the farce fell away from the idea of Washington and Americans, for although those English soldiers

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

were not cowards it was anything but a farce to face Americans on Bunker Hill or anywhere else. It turned out that that particular alarm was a mistake and that no attack was in progress, but never after was there much hilarity at farces ridiculing the Americans.

Close beside Bunker Hill Monument there was put up, a few years ago, a little building that was an entire departure from the fine simplicity of the original plans; a little classic stone temple, with six classic stone columns; an incongruous structure to find on Bunker Hill. It does not have even the excuse of being a museum, except for a few not-notable paintings; but it is a place where souvenirs and post-cards are sold. There ought to be nothing there but the monument itself. A structure of any sort breaks the splendid austerity of effect.

Not far from the monument is a statue in honor of the brave Prescott, showing him in his long and un-military coat just as he stood when giving the command to fire, that had been withheld till the whites of the English eyes could be seen. The statue is by the American sculptor, Story, and one wonders why, in spite of its excellence, it is wanting in vigorous vitality, and seems even a trifle priggish; and then it is noticed that down on one corner is some incised lettering telling that it was made at "Roma"—not Boston, or even good plain Rome, but "Roma"; and one wonders no longer that vitality and Americanism were missed.

But one need not trouble about such minor things as classic temples or Roman-American sculpture, for the

## WAPPING STREET AND BUNKER HILL

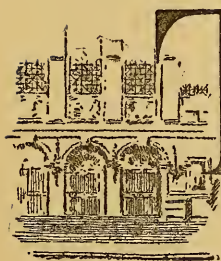
noble Bunker Hill Monument is here, telling forever its noble tale; and even the lines of the redoubts, so bravely held, have been remembered and carefully marked; and the sense of American glory is here.

In the Tower of London there is a cannon which, as the English claim, was captured at Bunker Hill; and a few years ago, when this was vauntingly shown to a visiting American, he looked it all over very calmly and then, just as calmly, said: "Oh, I see; you have the cannon—and we have the hill!"



## CHAPTER XVI

### THE BACK BAY AND THE STUDENTS' QUARTER



TO no Bostonian does the Back Bay mean water! The Charles, backed up by a dam to the dimensions of a bay, remains merely the Charles, and the Back Bay is the erstwhile swamp land beyond Beacon Hill and the Common. Even the Public Garden was, long ago, merely a marsh at the Common's end, and the great space beyond, now covered by endless streets and houses, is all made land. It is the Back Bay.

The main artery of the Back Bay is Commonwealth Avenue, and it is so proudly boulevarded, in noble sweep and breadth, that one is almost ready to forget the brown-stone monotony of its houses. The avenue is two hundred and twenty feet in width, from house-front to house-front, and is free of street cars. Down its center is a great, generous, tree-lined, well-shaded parkway, with a path down the middle for pedestrians; there are pleasantly placed benches by which the park-like character is increased; and this long central

## THE BACK BAY

greenery has a series of admirably placed statues, with the equestrian Washington, excellently done by Ball, at the beginning of the line; although Bostonians themselves long ago pointed out that he has turned his back on the State House and is riding away!

This avenue is so successful, so notable, as to have served as a model for other boulevards throughout the United States, and it has also given inspiration to Boston for her recent development of home-bordered parkways running out toward outlying suburbs.

One of the statues is of John Glover of Marblehead, who commanded a thousand men of his town, whom he formed into a redoubtable Marine Regiment, "soldiers and sailors too"; and this monument perpetuates his skill and bravery in getting Washington's army across to New York after the defeat at Long Island, and his even more remarkable success in boating the army across the Delaware on a certain bitter winter's night at a place still called Washington's Crossing. He died in his beloved Marblehead; but Boston has placed his statue here, feeling that in this city such a valiant son of New England should be forever remembered. His hand firmly grasps his sword hilt—but the sword itself has gone! Was it the act of some vandal, one wonders, some one with a degenerate idea of relic hunting? But at least nobody ever took his sword away from John Glover living.

Another of the line of statues is that of Alexander Hamilton, and it looks odd because it is minus the familiar queue. On the lower part of this monument is a medallion, of three profiles, apparently of Ham-



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

ilton; not quite understandable this, and one can think only of the two skulls of Saint Peter shown by the Roman guide, one of the saint in early manhood and the other in later life. This triple representation, if of Hamilton, does not have the reason for being of the wonderful triple portrait, by Gilbert Stuart, of Madame Bonaparte.

The great expanse of water that is really the Back Bay, and which borders the section of land that Boston perversely calls the Back Bay, is one of the glories of Boston. Although broadened by a dam, it is not water that is lifeless and dull, but water that is cheerful, wimpling, sparkling, very much alive. And when a winter storm comes the water dashes over its broadening embankment with all the appearance of a real sea. Along the waterside, and for a broad space back from the water, a parkway has been made that at any season of the year offers most admirable waterside walking. Surely, no other modern city is so thoughtful of its pedestrians, in these days of motor-cars, as is Boston. You may walk on Charles Bank for a long distance, on a broad concrete walk, with grass and shrubs on one side and the dancing water on the other. The long line of houses built on the Back Bay extension of Beacon Street looks out over the water, and the people who live in these houses prize the view, with its sunset glories; but all along the water-front one sees only the backs of the houses—the back windows! To the Bostonian, the proper fronting of a house is on a conventional two-sided street, and the architectural temptation of a fine front toward a fine water-view

## THE BACK BAY

does not alter propriety. "We have the view from our rear windows," they tell you; not even willing to adopt double-fronted houses, which would give architectural finish toward the water as well as toward the street.

Between Charles Bank and Beacon Hill, the city had become unattractive in development, whereupon, a few years ago, the property-owners banded together coöperatively and did a fine thing which would have been quite impossible to them acting as individual owners. They united in a comprehensive plan for improvement, and there has already been the most delightful success, for houses have been built that are mutually protected and protecting, notably on the cleverly arranged Charles Street Square, with its broad opening out toward the water, and its houses all balanced architecturally in the Colonial style. So successful has this been that there will shortly be an adjoining group of houses, which is to bear the name of Charles Street Circle.

To people outside of Boston, the words "Back Bay" represent social domination, but Boston itself knows that social supremacy has remained with Beacon Hill. Although "the sunny street that holds the sifted few" stretches into the Back Bay, and although the author of that line, Holmes, moved off into the levels, on that extended street—his last home was the ordinary-looking house at 296 Beacon Street—and although Silas Lapham and many another have built or bought in the Back Bay, most of the "sifted few" remain on Beacon Hill. Even the wealth that went to the Back Bay

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

found that it "cannot buy with gold the old associations"; and the Back Bay is, after all, just street after street filled with houses, representative of comfortable living, which are too ordinary to praise and yet not bad enough to criticise. It is not altogether clear why one feels resentment toward the houses and streets of the Back Bay, for they seem innocent enough: but when Henry James impatiently wrote of their "perspectives of security," he expressed, by this curious phrase, that the Back Bay somehow gets on the nerves.

But this region does at least spread out with a luxury of space, as if the city, released from the cramping of its original bounds—hemmed in as it originally was by bay and river and swamp, and therefore built with repression, with tightness, with narrowness of streets—rejoices in its new-found freedom.

And here there is something typically and pleasantly Bostonian. Beginning with the cross-streets of the Back Bay, the street names are in alphabetical sequence, with two-syllabled names alternating with three; or, I should say, being in Boston, dissyllables alternating with trisyllables; and the Bostonians take a nice pride in it. There are Arlington, Berkeley, Clarendon, Dartmouth, Exeter, Fairfield, Gloucester—and it would seem that Boston, differing from the rest of America and from England, deems Gloucester a trisyllable and will have none of the elided "Gloster."

That the present home of Margaret Deland is in the Back Bay is one of its pleasantest features, and the house, 35 Newbury Street, shows a great frontage of mullion-windowed glass, being even more marked in

## THE BACK BAY

respect to glass than her former home on Mt. Vernon Street. And this window frontage is for the sake of the jonquils and spring flowers that she loves and which she personally plants and watches. The creator of Doctor Lavendar, the author who has filled Old Chester with fascinating life, is almost as notable a flower-grower as she is a novelist, and once a year, in this comfortable, sunny home, she holds a winter sale of these jonquils that she has grown and gives the proceeds to a vacation home for girls, a project dear to her heart.

A fine daylight view of the sky-line of the Back Bay may be had from the center of the Cambridge Bridge; I do not remember any similar view in any other city; and it possesses the additional peculiarity of being a view of levels: the level of the water, the level of the parkway, then the generally level line of house roofs. But the finest view that the Back Bay offers is of the water itself and not the land, and at night instead of in the daytime. For this view, stand far out on Harvard Bridge, and the effect is beautiful in the extreme. You are hemmed in by the rows of city lights that surround the water on all sides; a mile away the view is finely ended, in one direction, by the arching curve of lights that mark the Cambridge Bridge; about as far in the other direction, the bordering lights converge as the water narrows; down the long sides are the unbroken lines of lights; you see nothing whatever but these lights, and the dark water dimly illumined by their gleam, and the restless reflections of the myriad lights struck waveringly down into the water, and the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

bands of light that royally make a diadem of the great dome on the height of Beacon Hill.

The social rivalry of Beacon Hill and the Back Bay may be left to the Bostonians, just as the social rivalry of south and north of Market Street may be left to Philadelphians; and Beacon Hill and the Back Bay are quite at one on the most Bostonian of all subjects, that of "family." For in Boston, every one of the worth while is a descendant; no one who is only an ascendant is for a moment worthy of comparison with a descendant! One of the cleverest Bostonians once remarked that although politically there should be equality, socially there should be "the" quality. As the verse of exclusiveness has it:

"The good old city of Boston,  
The city of culture and cod,  
Where the Cabots speak only to Lowells  
And the Lowells—speak only to God."

And there are endless developments. A famous Bostonian, commenting on the great fire of 1872, clearly indicated that the important feature was, not that he had suffered by this fire, but that his grandfather had lost 40 buildings in the big fire of 1760! Boston conversation is apt to be sprinkled thick with Bible-like genealogy; I have heard, as typical dinner-table conversation, such things as: "James was the son of John, you know, who was the son of Thomas, the cousin of William." Most Bostonians are not much interested in any conversation unless they can naturally put in an ancestor or so, and always, in



## THE BACK BAY

speaking of any happening of the past, Bostonians are bound to remember that some ancestor or connection was concerned. The traveler need not journey to China to find ancestor worship.

One would no more have Boston without its naïve flavor of family talk than have Maarken without its typical costumes: family belongs to Boston, as costumes belong to Maarken: and it is not in the least a boastful pride in ancestors who have done great deeds: the important thing is to be descended from certain stocks and lines, arbitrarily decided upon in the course of generations, with no reference whatever to merit or achievement; it is, indeed, no disadvantage for an ancestor to have done distinguished deeds for the nation or to have written distinguished books, but on the other hand it is no disadvantage for the ancestor to be without distinction. And there is at the same time a fine breadth and liberality about it all; when one of the oldest and finest families goes into the making of sausages, and makes them for many, many years and makes millions of dollars out of them, it does not hurt its social standing in the least, as it might in some more narrow city.

The intense feeling for family also works out rather oddly in the frequent tying up of family property to be held undivided by quite a number of heirs; and the fact that such cases often work hardship through the inability of the heirs either to dispose of the property or to receive incomes from it, does not at all tend to discourage the custom. A friend mentioned in casual conversation the other day that she was born on Mount

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Vernon Street and had only recently sold her one-ninth part of her old family home, and that she had done it with a keen wrench of feeling. You will not infrequently see in the newspapers advertisements offering to lend money to heirs on their undivided estate or their future inheritance.

Family is the common possession and talk of youth and age, of men and women and boys and girls. Ancestors are mulled over in all ordinary conversations. Only this evening, as I walked on Beacon Street beside the Common—literally this evening, and I quote literally what I chanced to overhear; indeed, even if I wished to I could not invent anything that would so well illustrate what I am setting down—only this evening, as two men passed me, one was saying: “His great-grandfather—”! That was all. It was but a few words caught in passing. But in no other city could such altogether delightful words have been heard.

I was led one day by a Boston friend to a lecture; it was a lecture on spiders; and the very first words of the lecturer were: “The Lycosidæ is the most prominent family we have in Boston.” And there came to mind a verse I had somewhere heard, a verse excellent because so really illustrative:

“Little Miss Beacon Street  
Sat on her window-seat,  
Eating her beans and brown bread;  
There came a small spider  
And sat down beside her—  
‘You’re an Argyroneta,’ she said.”

## THE BACK BAY

Lectures are themselves the very essence of Boston, and this comes from the time when lecturers, mostly Bostonians, went forth throughout the country, uplifting and instructing eager audiences. In those days, lecturers were held to be representative of the highest wisdom and lecturing was still deemed the most admirable way of delivering wisdom—and these two beliefs are still devoutly held in Boston. Where two or three are gathered together there is sure to be a lecturer in the midst of them; every Bostonian is a lecturer or a listener; the excellent habit is unescapable. Nothing else interests Bostonians as lectures do. The summer course, the fall course, the winter course, the spring course, the lectures of this, that and the other prophet, are always occupying their time. As a Bostonian said to me: "If you just sit down anywhere in Boston a lecture will be poured into your ears." There are lectures on astronomy and atavism and art; there are lectures on batrachians and Buddhism and butter-making; there are cooking lectures, cosmos lectures, curtain lectures, culture lectures; there are lectures on duty and digestion, on philosophy and Plato, on how to eat and sleep and think and dream; there are lectures on everything practical and impractical. In fact, the lectures and the lecturers are innumerable, and the Bostonians have many local authorities to whom they listen as oracles. As winter comes on the true Bostonian gathers together his lecture cards and sorts them, and hoards them, and gloats over them, just as a squirrel gathers and hoards his winter nuts. Lectures are nuts to Bostonians.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

I remember an acquaintance saying one afternoon, and I mention it because it is simply typical: "Aren't you going to So-and-so's lecture at four o'clock?" and when I replied that I was not, he said promptly: "Then, of course, you are going to Thus-and-so's lecture this evening?" It would take the last sting from death if a Bostonian could be assured of courses of lectures through futurity.

Holmes loved to sit down and write a poem after any lecture that especially interested him. Turn the leaves of his volumes of verse and you will see quite a number of lengthy poems with titles declaring them to have been written on his return from lectures.

The entire idea was amazingly helped on its way by the foundation of the Lowell lectures, three quarters of a century ago. A great sum was left by one of the Lowell family for the sole purpose of paying lecturers to talk to Bostonians, with the typically Bostonian request that the manager should always, if possible, be a Lowell. Scores of free lectures are delivered, annually, to Bostonians under the direction of the Lowell Institute, and the pace thus set is followed so enthusiastically by all sorts of enthusiasts and associations that there are hundreds of lectures every year.

Second only to lectures in popularity are concerts. Nothing, indeed, is so held to represent real culture, in Boston, as a devoted knowledge of music. There is an interest which amounts almost to a gentle pathos in a Boston musical night—any one of the many nights at which elect music is worshiped by the elect. The hall itself (there are many halls in Boston where music

## THE BACK BAY

may be heard, but there is only one that is "the" hall), the hall itself is angular and rectangular, with an effect of the gaunt and the gray, and there is a gentle general effect of age, of gray-haired women and of men with domes as bare as that of their own State House, and an interspersing of eye-glassed students holding big black books in which they devotedly follow the score.

If, as to the music itself, there is satisfaction with a high degree of technical correctness, without the coincident loveliness of which the composers dreamed, it would simply indicate that this is the way in which Boston prefers music to be given; if the music is a shade or so more percussive than is deemed desirable elsewhere, and if the drum, played passionately, is permitted to stand most markedly for music, it is all as it should be, and the young students beam with critical joy, and there is a gentle nodding of elderly heads. And, after all, Boston comes naturally by a love of the percussive, for at her Peace Jubilee, at the close of the Civil War, a mighty orchestra and a choir of ten thousand enthralled audiences of fifty thousand, while twelve cannon thundered in unison and fifty anvils clanged as one. I should never think of criticising Boston music any more than I should think of criticising Boston brown bread: each is something interestingly typical and loyally honored. I remember a French lady, a visitor, who, not quite getting the Boston viewpoint, asked wonderingly, "Why do they go to so much trouble to make it?" She was referring to the bread, but I notice, as I set it down, that the words seem equally to apply to the music. If Boston



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

should ever lose her charming idiosyncrasies, her brown bread, her baked beans, her fish balls, her music, her lectures, she would cease to be Boston.

Lectures and music are naturally included in the subject of the Back Bay because it is at the edge of the Back Bay that most of the halls for music and lectures are located, and especially along Huntington Avenue.

At Copley Square, where Huntington Avenue begins, there begins also the most interesting development of modern Boston, present-day Boston, for, ranging and spreading out, through and beyond the Back Bay and into the adjoining Fenlands, is building after building, educational or institutional; hospital buildings, philanthropic buildings, and, most notable of all, a wide range of school and college buildings; and the average of architectural beauty is admirably high.

Facing into Copley Square is the Boston Public Library, and, "Built by the people and dedicated to the advancement of learning" is the noble motto over the main entrance of this truly beautiful building. And it is a thoroughly good American library, ready to give due honor to the literature, the science, the art of America as well as of Europe. Set into the sides of the building are panels giving famous names in groups of similar kinds, and American names are honored with a quiet matter-of-factness. With Titian and Velasquez and Hogarth, one sees the name of West. With Boyle is joined the name of Rumford. With Sterne and St. Pierre and Chateaubriand stands the name of Irving. Macaulay is between Prescott and Bancroft. Calvin and Wesley keep company with

## THE BACK BAY

the New England Mather. And with Palladio and Wren the name of the Bostonian architect Bulfinch is conjoined.

The building is not only admirable in proportions, but extremely fine in details, and one need not pay attention to such minor points as the confusion of Strozzi lanterns at the entrance or to the pedestaled marble lady who, as Bostonians like to point out, is offering you a marble grape-fruit.

Even finer than the exterior is the interior, with its welcoming stairway with its splendor of tawny marble, and as you mount the stairs you pass by those dignified memorials to the Civil War Volunteers of Massachusetts, two great marble lions, one of them with a broken marble tail that has been so cleverly mended as in itself to represent positive art!

Mounting to the upper hallway you move past a series of exquisite mural panel paintings by Puvis de Chavannes; decorative figures in soft lavenders and greens, figures walking or floating against backgrounds of soft gray or in an ethereal blue that is only like the perfect blue of the clear sky of a wonderful morning; and all is so soft and easy and sweet and graceful as to make these murals an achievement in repression and beauty. Turning from the upper hall to the right, one comes to glorious pictures by Abbey, high-set, frieze-like, around all the upper part of a great room that is pilastered and paneled with dark oak, and ceilinged with dark oak beams picked out with gold. It is a shadowy room, a room intentionally dark, to give relief and foreground to the pictures,

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

which, representing the Quest of the Holy Grail, are glories of vivid coloring; knights and ladies and churchmen in pomp of purple and gold and bright scarlet. And on the floor above this is Sargent's "Frieze of the Prophets."

Within the quadrangle of the library is an inner court that is so reposeful, so charming, so delightful, with its arcaded space around its central fountain, as to make it an esthetic architectural triumph.

Facing the library, at the opposite end of Copley Square (and like the squares of most cities this is not at all a square in shape), is a building which, some years ago, was looked upon as an architectural wonder. It is a huge church, a massive pile of yellows and browns, and, built in mid-Victorian times, was meant to follow some of the ancient churchly architecture of Europe. Until recent years, Bostonians dwelt with pride on every detail of this great Trinity Church, and would insist on pointing out to visitors every detail of design and workmanship. But a change of taste has gone over the entire country, including Boston, and now it is quite realized that the church is not beautiful, in spite of the fact that its great central tower is tantalizingly remindful of that of Tewksbury and that its little outside stairway is tantalizingly remindful of a Norman stair of remarkable beauty at Canterbury—tantalizingly, but how different they are!

The Back Bay and the Fenlands, one merging imperceptibly into the other, are really one great flat region recovered from the swamps, the Fenlands pos-

## THE BACK BAY

sessing the great advantage of having a great part kept as parkways, with water and bridges. The residences of the Fenland are of a more interesting average than those of the Bay—and it is over here, in the Fen country, that Robert Grant the novelist lives, at 211 Bay State Road. How delightfully the words “Fen” and “Fenlands” bring up memories of the Boston of Old England, set as it is in the great flat region of the English Fens!

Also in the Fen country, and not far from Huntington Avenue, is Fenway Court, one of the most remarkable homes in America, built by Mrs. Isabella Gardner, who dreamt of erecting a Venetian palace on this level Brenta-like land, and realized her dream. It was a romantic plan romantically carried out. Mrs. Gardner brought across the ocean actual parts and fragments of old Italian buildings, that the basis should be actually Italian, and here she built her Venetian palace, and filled it with rare and costly examples of old-time European art.

Not far from this are the buildings of the Museum of Fine Arts, impressive of front toward Huntington Avenue, and positively beautiful in the façade that looks out over the water of the Fenway, for this face is stately with a long colonnade of great pillars.

The contents of the museum are of admirable average; much is of high interest, notably the paintings of distinguished Americans of the past by distinguished American painters of their time. Much of antique furniture is here, largely American, and it is displayed as if befitting the title of the museum, as if worthy, as

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

it is, of place among other beautiful products of the fine arts. The rooms where the furniture is displayed are arranged with wise harmony; a table of a certain period is likely to be in the center, with furniture of the same period—sideboard, cupboard, chairs—around the sides; and portraits of the men and women of the period, by painters of the period, are on the walls.

And there is here the most notable collection of old American silver in America, admirable examples, including much of the finest work of that admirable silversmith, Paul Revere.

A great area, throughout this general region, is so thick-dotted with educational institutions that it has begun to be called the Students' Quarter, or, as some Bostonians love to call it, "our Latin Quarter." And all this has no reference to Cambridge, which is across the river and outside the city limits; all this is actually within Boston, and Boston is very proud of it.

In this great clump of Back Bay and Fenland schools there are already some twelve thousand students in addition to the Boston-born; and the students and the buildings are constantly increasing in numbers. It is fine, too, that most of these educational buildings are as noteworthy, architecturally, as are the numerous buildings that philanthropic and endowed organizations have built in this general quarter.

With the influence of all these schools, added to the admitted culture of generations, one might expect a complete fastidiousness in general speech: and yet,



## THE BACK BAY

throughout all Boston there is a general and amusing treatment of "r's". In the first place, Bostonians eliminate this letter altogether from a host of words such as "Bunker," which is always given as if it were spelled "Bunkah." For this they will probably say, and rightly, that there is good authority. And I presume that, after all, they can show excellent authority for their thriftiness with these discarded "r's," for they do not really throw them away or really mislay them, but use them on words that do not show the letter. It is fascinating to hear them add an "r" to the end of "area," or say that their dog "nors" a bone; it is fascinating to hear them speak of "standing in awr"; it is fascinating to hear a highly-cultured Bostonian, a Brahmin of Brahmins, call his wife "Bewler" for Beulah or say "Anner" for Anna.

It was a Bostonian, who, having traveled and observed and realized, remarked quaintly, of the succession of Quincys called Josiah—pronounced, of course, "Josiar"—that the line did not go on from sire to son but "from 'Siar to 'Siar'!"

Most notable of all the educational buildings of the Fenland are those of the School of Medicine of Harvard University; for Harvard, instead of having all its buildings in Cambridge, came here to build its school for doctors.

The buildings are of marble; a group of five, fronted and united by terraces and balustrades, and all facing into a central plaza large enough to give stately architectural relief. The pillared administration building is flanked on either side by laboratory buildings and

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

the entire group forms a simple and beautiful whole, with an air of noble permanence.

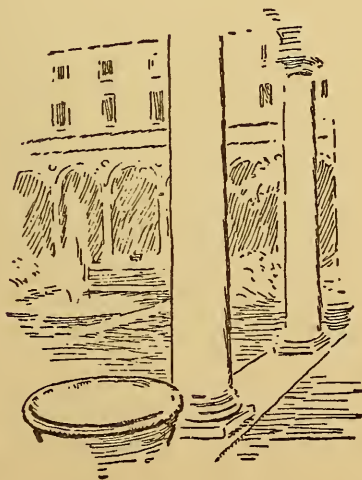
One Sunday afternoon I was walking near these buildings when I noticed people running; men well garbed and women well gowned were running; a limousine drew up at the curb and two men and a woman leaped from it and ran; a street car stopped and men and women tumbled from it and ran; it was not mere hurrying, but actual running, and all ran around the open end of the Medical School plaza. It was clear that there was either a terrible accident or a fire—most likely one of those noble buildings, apparently fireproof, was aflame!—so I hurried with the others and rounded the corner, and all were rushing for a doorway—beside which was a notice declaring that there was to be a Free Public Lecture, that the doors were open at 3, and that they were absolutely to be closed at 4:05! I looked at my watch—it was 4:03½—and I understood the running. But I think I never shall be able to understand what they expected the people to do who should enter at 3, nor why the closing time was so oddly fixed at precisely 4:05!

As I looked and read and turned away, men and women, but in diminishing number, were still running up, darting past me, and plunging through the door. I halted, for it came to me that the notice did not mention either the lecturer's name or his subject—and what a fascinating subject it must be to draw these prosperous men and women literally on the run!

I asked a man of well over sixty, as he flew by. He glanced at me reproachfully, he did not check his

## THE BACK BAY

speed, but he flung back over his shoulder as he plunged at the door some words that absurdly seemed to end in "fat." Clearly, I must inquire further and must not, again, try to check any one near the door. It was 4:04½. I saw a youth come bounding on. I hurried toward him and turned beside him and, falling into his stride, asked him what was to be the lecture. We strode together; and he gasped, "The Assimilation of Fats"! With that he dashed at the door—he was the last one in—instantly it was locked—the next comer, a moment too late, tried the handle in grieved futility—it was five minutes after four.



## CHAPTER XVII

### HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT



**I**N a forgotten and faded part of Boston, somewhat away from the center of the city, rises a hill whose top is green with grass and thick with elms and lindens, and on whose highest point stands a monument of exceptionally fine design; and this monument marks the spot of a great victory, one of the victories of Washington. And although it was a military victory it was bloodless; although it was a victory of immense importance to America it was won without loss. And the hill is still known as Dorchester Heights, just as it was when General Washington made it famous at the time of the Evacuation of Boston.

Before the Revolution the height was a place of pleasant resort, and John Adams mentions in his diary that on one evening in 1769, fifty-nine toasts were drunk at a barbecue and feast here to which three hundred guests sat down, and he adds, evidently thinking that if fifty-nine toasts were drunk so would many of the people naturally be expected to be, that "not one person was intoxicated or near it."

After the Revolutionary days this general region

## HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT

was looked upon for a time as holding great possibilities of residence, and wealth and aristocracy were expected to come, and a big hotel was even built here which, however, failed to succeed, for the district failed to attract the expected classes, whereupon the hotel building was taken over by the very opposite of a sparkling hotel, an asylum for the blind, an asylum that gradually became very famous under the name of Perkins—and it is most curious that the wife of the most distinguished of the successive heads of this blind asylum was the author of the stirring lines beginning, “Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord!”—for Mrs. Julia Ward Howe, early in her life, lived here, for Doctor Howe, her husband, was long the superintendent. But even the asylum has moved elsewhere, and just recently the building itself, a really good-looking structure, was torn down and its material all sold. It was a satisfaction, however, to learn that a beautiful central stairway was bought by a Bostonian who wished to build it into a house of his own, for it is so sadly general that beautiful parts of fine old buildings are thrown away and burned when the buildings are taken down.

The district at present has not much to attract a visitor, for the streets and buildings are almost all quite commonplace; although even an otherwise commonplace district deserves appreciation for such efforts to save its old trees as this district has made, even to the extent, in places, of encouraging them to live even when surrounded by sidewalk stones.

It was early in the Revolution that Dorchester



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Heights became famous. When the British held Boston they fortified every place that seemed important to the defense of the city, and then settled down to await developments. Meanwhile, with a large American army so dispersed as to cover every possible line of approach, it was a difficult matter to get needed provisions into the city, and when ships were sent off on foraging expeditions it was not safe for them to make landings anywhere on the New England coast, for the entire countryside was in arms. All this caused much hardship and suffering, for garrison and townsfolk alike, and plan after plan was evolved by the British officers for advancing upon the Americans and defeating and dispersing them; but always the officers remembered Bunker Hill, and put each plan aside in hopes of finding a better one or of receiving such powerful reënforcements as would give to an attack the probability of success. And as they waited and planned and hesitated, General Washington was himself constantly planning and waiting and watching, eager for a chance to drive the British away. Slowly advancing here, patiently strengthening a defense there, ceaselessly studying and watching, steadily putting into the troops the discipline and patience that they needed, he came to see where a possible opportunity lay. And that opportunity was on Dorchester Heights, for from that vantage point he could command the harbor and the city—if he had proper guns. And with incredible carelessness, the British had failed to fortify the spot; had failed even to place troops there.

## HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT

But although there was no British obstacle, there was the obstacle that lay in lack of equipment. The Americans had no cannon except some minor field-pieces. They had no siege guns of sufficient range and caliber to sweep the harbor even if the height were seized. And there was the further consideration that heavy guns would be needed even in holding the height, for the British could not be expected to make over again the mistake of Bunker Hill and send lines of practically unsupported troops against American entrenchments; the British would so combine heavy cannonading with assault that, unless the Americans should have proper artillery, the heights would be untenable and the Americans would be compelled to retreat; the hill would then be thoroughly entrenched, by the British, against attack from the American side, and the capture of the city would be almost hopeless. So Washington knew that he must wait for big guns before he could dare to seize the heights, and meanwhile he could only hope that the British would continue to be so confident of his getting no big guns that they would not themselves take possession of that vantage point. It seems incredible, looking back at it, that this prominent hill, just at the edge of the city (it is now included within the city limits), should have escaped occupation by either side, when there were thousands of British soldiers within the city and thousands of Americans hemming the city in.

From the first, even before the ultimate seizure of Dorchester Heights was decided upon, the possession of heavy guns had been recognized as of the highest

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

importance to the besiegers. The guns were got; and their getting was a remarkable achievement, one of the most remarkable of any war in history.

The man to whom the task was entrusted was young Henry Knox, afterwards to become the famous General Knox; and his fame and advancement, as the trusted artillery officer, the trusted friend and helper of Washington, began with his selection for this task.

Not much of a soldier, one might in those early days have thought, for his occupation had been the peaceful one of bookseller! He had begun business for himself in Boston, in the early 1770's, with an initial importation of books to the value of three hundred and forty pounds, which total was steadily increased until it was over two thousand pounds, and his business became flourishing and his shop was known as a popular meeting-place for the best men and women of the city. Then financial trouble came to him as it came to all the business men of Boston, through the threatened break with England, the closing of the port, and the general disorganization of trade. When the war actually began, Knox put his ruined business aside and promptly joined the American forces. Throughout the war he forgot all about his books—he was General Knox, the great master of artillery. And it is pleasant to know that when the war was at length over, and he might fairly have repudiated all of his debts to English publishers because his financial trouble had come altogether from the British Government and because his shop was robbed and looted by British soldiers, he did not like to hold the English

## HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT

publishers responsible, and continued to make payments on these pre-Revolutionary debts long after the war was over.

Knox was extremely handsome and likable as well as capable. In fact, his capacity was recognized from the beginning. He had married the daughter of an aristocrat, in spite of the opposition of her family, and was so highly thought of that strong efforts were made to attach him to the English before he could join the Revolutionists. That he was an active member of the handsomely uniformed local organization known as the Grenadier Guards, and second in command, made him of practical promise as a soldier; and when it was learned that he would not fight for England, General Gage peremptorily forbade him to leave Boston. But his wife quilted his sword into the lining of his cloak and he escaped from the city in disguise and reached the American lines.

From the first, Washington liked him and he liked Washington. Washington needed a man who could be trusted to get cannon. Here was Henry Knox, than whom no man was more dependable. It was a supreme opportunity for both. Crown Point and Ticonderoga had been captured ("In the name of Jehovah and the Continental Congress!"), and there were many cannon, at those two adjacent forts, ready to be used; and Knox was told to go and get them. And although it was a tremendous undertaking he started off without a doubt of success.

On his way to Ticonderoga there was one of the curious meetings of history, for on a stormy winter

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

night, on the border of Lake George, Knox met Major André, who was on his way as a prisoner to Lancaster, Pennsylvania—this being, of course, an earlier capture than the later fatal one. The two young men spent a pleasant evening together, for they had tastes in common and were alike bright and agreeable, and in the morning they parted—only to meet again when André was once more a prisoner. And it was severe suffering for Knox, long afterward, remembering this pleasant winter meeting beside Lake George, to sit as a member of the court martial that found it inevitable to condemn André to death.

Knox reached Ticonderoga and Crown Point and found the cannon there. And we still may read his fascinating inventory. There were 14 mortars and cohorns, brass and iron, from 4½" to 13" diameter of bore; there were two iron howitzers; there were 43 cannon, from 3-pounders to 18-pounders. There was thus the formidable number of 59 guns in all, with a total formidable weight of 119,900 pounds! And some of the 18-pounders weighed as high as 5000 pounds each.

This enormous weight of artillery Knox was to convey to Boston without the loss of a single unnecessary hour. He was to take it through miles and miles of wild wilderness, by a rough road which was practically no road at all, in mid-winter; he was to go right across the Berkshires; and those who have motored over those splendid hills in summer on perfect roads, and know what heights and grades there are, will some-



## HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT

what appreciate how gigantic was the task confronting Knox, of dragging one hundred and twenty thousand pounds of cannon over the mountain trails, through snow and ice and storm. And it would be hard to find words more brave and confident than those he wrote to Washington; not over-confident, not boastful, for he merely "hoped"; but we may be sure that Washington, reading the message, felt no doubts; Knox wrote, telling of finding the guns, and said: "I hope in sixteen or seventeen days' time to be able to present to Your Excellency a noble train of artillery." And his use of the word "noble"—what a touch it gives! That word, alone, would show the bravely romantic strain in Knox. He did not say "big" or "heavy" or "important" or "much-needed," but instinctively used the delightful word "noble"—"a noble train of artillery!"

Knox had been instructed by Washington as to how many horses to use, but there on the spot he gave up all idea of horses, being the kind of man who could assume the responsibility of altering instructions when it seemed advisable to do so, and he wrote to Washington that he had procured eighty yoke of oxen instead. He wrote from Albany on January 5th, eagerly impatient of a delay through a "cruel thaw" which made it temporarily impossible to cross the Hudson—which, to our amazement, we find had to be crossed "four times from Lake George to this town!" And from the Hudson he at length struck across the country, and over the great heights, from Kinder-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

hook to Great Barrington and thence to Springfield, from which place he went triumphantly on to Boston. It was an amazing achievement.

Day by day Washington had feared that the British would seize the heights of Dorchester. All he could do, as he waited, was to put in readiness bales of screwed hay and fascines of white birch, ready for the making of redoubts—the white birch that even now springs up so freely all over the untillable parts of eastern Massachusetts. The weather continued so cold, and the ground so deeply frozen, that there seemed no chance to intrench on Dorchester, and surface redoubts were therefore all that could be prepared for. And there was moral severity as well as the severity of winter, as shown by General Orders of a winter day early in 1776 positively forbidding not only the soldiers, but the officers as well, to play cards or other games of chance, for “At this time of public distress, men may find enough to do in the service of God and their country, without abandoning themselves to vice and immorality.”

With the arrival of Knox and the cannon the military situation was changed. It was now but a matter of bravely and cautiously making the final move. And on the night of March 4, the move was made.

It was a moonlight night. The British were unwatchfully asleep, refusing to let more than their pickets and patrols be disturbed by a severe cannonading which was kept up by the Americans from various points about the city to draw attention from the sending of a large number of men and wagons and guns

## HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT

to Dorchester, where the steep height was mounted and defensive preparations instantly begun. It was a literal proving that "the heights by great men reached and kept are not attained by sudden flight," but that they, while their opponents slept, were toiling upward in the night. Throughout the night the Americans worked with intense energy, and when morning came there was a redoubt-crowned hill, with soldiers and guns. The British gazed at it in amazement and soon realized that Washington had decisively outwitted them, for they quickly discovered that his position commanded the harbor and the city.

It has never, I think, been sufficiently understood, in regard to Washington's siege of Boston, that he came to the task, not as a stranger to that city but with a close knowledge of Boston localities. As a young officer, fresh from the campaign of Braddock, a great military movement with whose every detail he had been familiar, he had been sent to Boston, in 1756, on military matters and to tell Governor Shirley the circumstances of the death of Shirley's son on the Monongahela. At that time, Washington stayed ten days in Boston, and not only mingled with the best society of the town, but made it a point, with his military experience and ambitions, to see Boston thoroughly, even to the extent of visiting Castle William, out in the harbor. He could not well have had any definite premonition, twenty years before the Revolution; but none the less, born soldier that he was, he acquired such local knowledge as made Boston and its defenses familiar ground.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

And, too, he came to the siege with full understanding of British officers and soldiers, of British methods and ways of thought, of a certain blundering and unwatchful bravery which marked their methods; he had learned all this from his close association with Braddock and his officers, and the knowledge thus gained gave him such an insight into the workings of the English military mind as made it possible for him to plan with success for Dorchester; counting, first, on British inaction, and next on his own preparations to meet their belated activity.

Washington fully expected an attack on his vital position at Dorchester. General Howe fully expected to make one, and Lord Percy was hurried toward Dorchester with twenty-four hundred men. The assembling of this force was witnessed not only by the American army, but by the people of the city, who gathered in massed throngs on the neighboring hills.

It was a steep ascent to the American position; it is steep even now, although much of the ground round about has been graded and leveled; it was too steep for the successful depression of artillery in those early days, and so the Americans made ready, not only with their rifles, but with barrels of stone and sand to roll down on Percy's men as they should come up the hill. But only a few of Percy's men reached even the foot of the hill, for a heavy rain and storm came on, with so high a wind and such rough water and dangerous surf that the landing of the English troops to make an attack became impossible. The storm continued all that day, and all the following

## HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT

night and the next day, and when it ceased the Americans had made their position so strong that it was absolutely useless to attack it. And Washington could now at any moment cannonade Boston.

Washington had been specifically authorized by Congress to attack Boston even though the town might thereby be destroyed. General Howe, appreciating to the full the new gravity of his position, frankly threatened to burn the town if an attack should be made. But Howe knew that his position had suddenly become hopeless; he was trapped and was ready for an accommodation; and Washington, for his part, could not bear to have the loyal city destroyed. There was some difficulty in reaching an agreement between the two leaders, for, such being sometimes the absurdities of practical affairs, Howe would not address Washington in those early days as an acknowledged General, and Washington would not permit himself to be addressed in any other way. However, what may be called a gentlemen's agreement was unofficially arranged, by which Howe was promptly to evacuate the city and Washington was to refrain from using his guns. There was almost two weeks of preparation for the departure, with the Americans watchfully waiting, and on March 17th the British fleet sailed away, dropping out of the harbor in long procession, bearing eleven thousand troops and one thousand Boston refugees; going to Halifax, these refugees, self-condemned and unhappy exiles; and ever since has "Go to Halifax" been an opprobrious term in most of America, just as I have noticed the



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

word "Hessian" still used opprobriously down in Virginia.

What a spectacle must the sailing of the British fleet have been. There were as many as one hundred and seventy ships, so some of the descriptions have it, and soldiers and civilians, men and women and children, crowded every vantage point, every house-top and hill, to see the ships move sullenly away and watch the white sails disappear in the distance.

And that was how Washington won Boston; won it with superbness of victory, completeness of success; won it without loss of life except such as now and then had come from the clashing of outposts; won it, in the final analysis, through discerning the capacity of Henry Knox and the importance of Dorchester Heights. And that is why this hill, situated amid what are now commonplace surroundings, takes on the high aspect of romantic and vital history. But even as thoughts came to me of the contrast between the romantic past and the commonplace present, the picturesque appeared, for, as I walked about the hill, two Roman Catholic nuns suddenly appeared, passing slowly by, each wearing her headdress of white and her kirtle of blue, each with the great, plain, starched linen headdress pinned tightly about the lines of the face. It was as if they had serenely walked out of Normandy only to walk serenely around the corner into Normandy again, on this American hill.

The height is topped by a shapely, impressive, fitting monument, of white marble, with a steeple-like marble top that in shape is like the steeple of some

## HEIGHTS REACHED AND KEPT

admirable old American meeting-house; an admirable idea admirably executed. (And this hill, with its space of greenery about the monument carefully preserved, is in itself a noble monument to American genius and patriotism. It is seldom seen by Bostonians, although it can readily be reached in less than half an hour from the center of the city, and the reason for neglect is probably that the victory of Dorchester was won without the bloodshed that seems to be needed to make a picturesque appeal to most people. It was a victory of brains, not blood.

There is a splendid portrait of Knox, by Gilbert Stuart, that is proudly preserved in Boston in the Museum of Fine Arts. Few things are better for a country than the possession of admirable paintings of those of its citizens who have done great deeds; and here is the real Knox. As you look at him you see at once that of course he would get those guns! Of course he would do whatever he set out to do. Here he stands, alive and alert, one hand on his hip and the other resting upon a cannon, and thus cleverly, as Stuart meant it, concealing the absence of two fingers, lost not in battle, but in a gunning accident before the war. Knox looks out of the canvas as if still alive; masterful, capable, good-humored, firm, self-controlled, efficient; a handsome man, too, with high and heavy eyebrows and florid face; and he wears his uniform, of the mellowest of buff and the deepest of blue, with an air! Boston is fortunate indeed in her mementoes of Dorchester Heights, for not only has she the Heights themselves, but she has

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

Gilbert Stuart's paintings of the two men to whom the victory was owing—she has his most famous Washington, and this superb portrait of Knox.



## CHAPTER XVIII

“COLLEGES RED AND COMMON GREEN”



TO people in general, away from Boston, Harvard means Cambridge and Cambridge Harvard; the names are used as if practically interchangeable; although, as a matter of fact, every one knows that there is at least something in Cambridge that is not included within the university—for is there not the home of Longfellow! Another general idea is that Cambridge is part of Boston, whereas in reality Cambridge is a separate city, although it is just on the other side of the Charles and ought, for various reasons, to be included within Boston limits. To most intents and purposes it is really a part of Boston, and Bostonians so consider it.

There is really a great deal of Cambridge outside of Harvard. There is Radcliffe, that active and growing college for young women; and there is a thriving city besides, with numerous features of interest. It may be regretted that so much of the city is painted from the same pot of paint, a dingy drab, that has been used on the houses of most of Boston's suburbs,

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

for dingy drab as a permeative color is not inspiring; but after all, that is a minor point.

Cambridge is a busy city, with its student life and its active Harvard and Radcliffe, but as I think of it there comes, for the moment, in place of the picture of its business and social and educational life, that of one of the most beautiful of cemeteries, in every respect restful, as a beautiful cemetery ought to be; that of Mount Auburn. For Mount Auburn represents so much of the best history of Boston, holds so much of the dust of Boston genius.

It occupies a great area of gently rolling land, on the farther edge of Cambridge; it is thickly dotted with trees, it is charming with birds and squirrels, there are fountains tossing their water high, and there are great beds of flowers; and it is astonishing what a number of famous New Englanders have found their resting-place here. Here lies James Russell Lowell, under a dark-colored stone, amid a group of other Lowells who are gathered about him, including several who died in the Civil War. Not far away is the little headstone which marks the grave of Motley. Near Motley is the dignified tomb of Longfellow, and close at hand are the graves of Parkman and Holmes.

It is amazing; for this notable group of men were practically neighbors and friends and contemporaries while living, and now they are neighbors in their final rest. So close-gathered are they within this great cemetery that they might almost be under one monument! And, were it not for the Concord group, such a monument might almost stand to the memory



## “COLLEGES RED AND COMMON GREEN”

of New England literature. Seldom, elsewhere, has there been such a close concentration of literary fame.

On the way back into Cambridge, Elmwood is passed, the home of Lowell, the house where he was born, and where he lived his life of honored achievement, and where he died; an attractive old Colonial house, with a fetching line, on either side of the door, of low box-bushes shaded by great elms which are fading away, like innumerable other beautiful elms here in Cambridge and elsewhere in New England, under the attacks of the destructive descendants of that imported moth that won dubious fame for the Harvard professor who carelessly allowed it to fly away after his experiments. Countless elms have already perished from the ravages of the gypsy moths, themselves of more than countless number; but at least every American member of that family of moths can unquestioningly, if there is any satisfaction in the fact, trace his descent from the moth who was bred at Harvard.

Lowell was not the first famous inhabitant of his beautiful house, for it has the distinction of having been the home of the very last of the royal governors of Massachusetts, and, also before it became the Lowell home, it was that of Elbridge Gerry, the politician whose ambition was to be known as a mighty statesman, and who really won high place, but who succeeded only in sending his name down to posterity linked with the notorious Gerrymander.

In Lowell's time it was deemed a mere nothing to walk from Cambridge into Boston and back; Lowell

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

himself often did it; and even the ladies of Cambridge used frequently to walk into Boston to do their shopping and then would likewise return on foot. Somehow, the people of those days managed to accomplish a great deal without motor-cars or trolleys; in these degenerate times it is considered very tiring to most people to walk, not from Boston—that would be impossible!—but even the short distance from Cambridge Common to Lowell's house and back.

A little farther toward the center of Cambridge is the house that was long the home of Longfellow, a beautiful old Colonial building, dignified in its buff and white, with its plain pilasters, its dormered and balustraded roof, its fine chimneys, its generous lines, its terraced front. The terrace wall is thick-greened with ivy, great elms shade the house and grounds, and along the sidewalk line is a high hedge of lilacs. Lilac hedges, indeed, are a delightful characteristic of Cambridge, and one which I do not remember having noticed as a feature in any other town.

It has somewhat become the fashion among certain classes to deem Longfellow a poet of insignificance, which is as much of a mistake as to deem him among the very greatest. He put so much of beauty and sweetness and fine Americanism into his poetry as to deserve high place in the regard of the world and particularly in that of his own country. His excellent English is always so excellently simple that some think it is a sign of inferiority! But even Browning thought no less of him on that account, but loved both his poetry and himself, and walked the London streets

## “COLLEGES RED AND COMMON GREEN”

with him in eager talk—the English poet literally arm in arm with the American!

Distinguished though any house would be by the long residence of Longfellow, this house of his has another and even greater fame; for it was the headquarters of General Washington during most of the time that he was conducting his operations against Boston. The fine old house, loved and lived in by men of such diverse greatness, stands as if with a sort of sedate pride in such associations.

For some years between the time of its occupation by Washington and that by Longfellow it was the home of a certain cunning Andrew Craigie who, it is worth remembering, as a warning not to apply the word “patriot” to everybody connected with early times, was an apothecary-general in the hospital service in the Revolution and was believed to have made a fortune through using his special opportunities to buy medicines cheap and sell them to the army dear. “Graft,” and unscrupulous holders of office, are evidently not products of modern days exclusively.

Next door to the stately Longfellow house is one that is even finer and more stately; indeed, the entire neighborhood hereabouts is full of charming homes, mostly Colonial, or admirable copies of the Colonial style. Cambridge displays a great area of beautiful living, with beautiful houses, sloping lawns, and green trees, and it is a pleasure to notice that these trees are largely horse-chestnuts, after knowing what ravages are taking place among the elms.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

A few minutes' walk from the Longfellow house takes one to the site of one of the most thrilling events in the world, at least one of the most thrilling to any American, the spot on Cambridge Common where George Washington first took command of the American army. Here, soldiers and officers stood in array before him, as he sat upon his horse under an elm that even then was old, and in a few simple words declared that he assumed command. And that old elm is still standing! It is only a wreck, now, this ancient tree, only a fragment, a remnant, and trolley wires crisscross it and trolleys rumble close beside, but it is still there, still alive, a monument to that event of significance. It stands in the center of a tiny bit of green, at a street intersection at the edge of the Common, and a tablet commemorates the event with a simple dignity which befits the event itself.

UNDER THIS TREE  
WASHINGTON  
FIRST TOOK COMMAND  
OF THE  
AMERICAN ARMY,  
JULY 3, 1775.

On the Common itself stand several cannon, big, black, heavy, long-barreled things; not only old cannon, but very distinguished old cannon, for at least two of them were among the very ones that General Knox brought down so marvelously from Ticonderoga when Washington needed them to use in his siege operations against Boston.

The ancient Washington elm, and these cannon, are

## “COLLEGES RED AND COMMON GREEN”

among the things that ought to be seen by every American.

Off at the edge of the Common, close to where the Harvard buildings begin, is an open space where the American soldiers, some twelve hundred of them, lined up for their march to Bunker Hill, on the night before the battle; a brave and solemn thing to do, for all knew that they were not only about to risk death in battle, but that they were to take the even more serious risk of death as traitors should they fail. The President of Harvard stood on the steps of a gambrel-roofed, elm-shaded, altogether delightful old house, to pray for the soldiers as they stood solemnly before him. The fine old house has disappeared; within my own memory it has been torn down, apparently without reason, for no other house has taken its place; but although the beautiful old house has been demolished, and although that Harvard president became long since dust, the bravely impressive scene has not been forgotten—and ought never to be forgotten.

And it also need not be forgotten that this was the house in which, some quarter of a century after the Revolution, Oliver Wendell Holmes was born.

Another old house, now known as the Wadsworth house, was until recent years the home of the Harvard presidents, in honored sequence; in fact, it was built, in 1726, for the very purpose of being the home of the presidents. Its back is toward the university grounds and buildings, but it faces out on busy Massachusetts Avenue, and its porticoed door is directly on the side-



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

walk. The narrow portico would just keep the rain off a president as he stood while putting the key in the lock. Two plain wooden columns support a pediment with severe triglyphs, and there are such plain, simple, good ornaments as to make it a delight among porticoed doorways. The door itself is eight-paneled, with a high-set knob and with four lights of glass above to light the entry. And it is the door through which Ralph Waldo Emerson used to pop in and out! For he was "President's messenger" when working his way through Harvard.

Harvard University was founded almost three centuries ago; it was founded as far back as 1636! And what those early Americans determined upon was expressed in words that are perpetuated in an inscription at the principal gateway to the Harvard grounds:

"After God had carried vs safe to New England, and wee had bvlided ovr hovses, provided necessaries for ovr livelihood, reard convenient places for Gods worship, and settled the civill government, one of the next things we longed for and looked after was to advance learning and perpetvate it to posterity."

It was in 1636 that the General Court of Massachusetts Bay agreed to give four hundred pounds towards a "schoale or colledge," half to be paid the next year and half when the building should be finished, and it was ordered that the school be established at Newetowne, and that Newetowne should thenceforth be called Cambridge, and later it was ordered that the college "shall bee called Harvard Colledge": which directions were duly followed.

## “COLLEGES RED AND COMMON GREEN”

Harvard dislikes outside criticism, but enjoys humorous flings if it flings the humor itself; as when Harvard men some years ago flung paint humorously upon John Harvard's statue—only to find, in that case, that it did not seem so very humorous after all! And as to that statue, with its inscription, “John Harvard, Founder, 1638,” even dignitaries of the university are prone to refer to it as the “statue of the three lies”; for John Harvard was not the founder; and it was not even in the year of the founding, but two years afterwards, that he made the bequest, of all his library, some three hundred books, and half of his fortune of some fifteen hundred pounds, which actually acted as the needed impulse to carry out the initial inspiration; and, finally, the figure does not really represent John Harvard, for it is made from the sculptor's imagination of what he ought to look like! And it does not, it may be added, give precisely the impression of what John Harvard really was—a cultured, earnest minister, of only thirty-one years of age. And few men dying at thirty-one have been able to link their names with a movement or institution so famous.

Another of the flings from within Harvard came from the beloved *Lampoon*, which, referring to a not-so-very-long-ago president, noticeably cold in general mien, suggested that a monument be raised to him on a certain spot, with an inscription declaring that there he actually spoke to a freshman.

The fine gateways to the Harvard grounds, all of them memorials or gifts, add materially, in connection

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

with the wall which surrounds a great part of the grounds, in giving an effect of harmonizing and binding together college buildings which are really a conglomeration of architecture; wall and gateways almost give character and distinction to the entire group of buildings; although some of the buildings, considered individually, cannot be deemed either distinguished or attractive.

It is pleasant to note that, although many a modern college or university is not content without the ambitious name of "campus," old Harvard is quite satisfied in honoring its great, reposeful, tree-shaded, grassy rectangle, surrounded as it is by college buildings, with the name of "yard."

The most interesting and at the same time the oldest of all the Harvard buildings is Massachusetts Hall, an attractive old structure of time-dulled brick, standing just inside the main entrance. It was built two centuries ago and is an admirable example of its fine period, with twin-chimneyed gable at either end, with shingled gambrel-roof, with its long row of dormers, its long wooden balustrade, its small-paned windows, and the lines of slightly projecting brick which mark the floor-lines and give special distinctiveness.

The finest of all the buildings is the great modern structure, built in memory of one of those drowned on the *Titanic*, known as the Widener Memorial Library, a magnificent structure that represents lavishness of wealth and a deep sense of classical beauty. The splendid front looks out on charming greenery, on grass and elms, with here and there a maple or pine or

## “COLLEGES RED AND COMMON GREEN”

chestnut. The entrance door is approached by a broad flight of granite steps, and at the top of the steps is a long colonnade of mighty pillars of stone, fronting the façade in splendid dignity. The interior of the building is temple-like in beauty, in its soft glory of smooth but unpolished stone. There is a curious and impressive vista when one enters; for ahead, at a sort of vanishing point of sight, through and beyond the superb hall, is the effectively placed portrait of Widener himself, as if looking pleasantly at each man who enters.

The other day I saw a full-page description of this building in one of the Boston dailies, and quite a part of the reading matter—twenty-four lines of it and a subhead, to be precise—was devoted to what was termed the “most curious book” in the library that the great building holds. “It is curious, not because the book is rare or splendid or has the most remarkable associations or represents the highest flights of an immortal author.” You see, it is not notable for any of the reasons which would arrest attention in Chicago or San Francisco or New York or Paris or London. But the newspaper, after tantalizingly going on about non-existent reasons, at length works up to the climax, the real cause of the book’s being singled out for distinction. It seems that it is a presentation copy, with a personal inscription to the man whose name gives name to the library, and that the inscription spells the word “guild” without the “u”!—just “gild”! That is absolutely all. A great Boston newspaper accepts the contribution of some one of its

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

staff who is so little conversant with English as not to know that the word in question may properly and with authority be spelled "gild"; no editor, no copyreader, checks it or looks it up; and the splendid library and the remarkably beautiful building are held up to Boston scorn because of the newspaper's own deficiency in orthographic knowledge; and, according to the newspaper, as the supposed error is noted, "your face wears a smile of amused wonder." I tell of this, because it is so typical of Boston's absolute certainty that nothing can be right which is not done precisely as a Boston man would do it.

It is a natural transition from the most beautiful of the buildings of Harvard to that which is furthest from beauty—the great Memorial Hall, which was put up some half a century ago as if to be a notable example of that bad period when scarcely anything of beauty was built. But although this building itself is unbeautiful, the idea that caused it to be built was nobly beautiful; for it was erected as a memorial to the men of Harvard who gave their lives for their country in the Civil War. And much of the interior is of striking effect. Down the lofty and impressive main corridor there are tablets to one after another of the many who thus died—a thrilling list. One sees such old New England names as Peabody, Wadsworth, and Bowditch; one sees the name of Fletcher Webster; one sees that an Edward Revere died at Antietam and a Paul Revere at Gettysburg.

One end of the building is given over to a great college dining-hall, imposing and lofty-roofed, and so



## “COLLEGES RED AND COMMON GREEN”

remindful of the dining-hall of Christ Church at Oxford as clearly to show that it must have been inspired by that noble hall, although it is without the wealth of finished beauty that the Oxford hall presents. Still, this Harvard hall is very impressive; in spite of the mistake of ill-placed rows of hat-racks, and in spite of the heaviness of the crockery on the long rows of long tables, and in spite of an Ethiopian and his water-pitcher at the end of each row.

But what is most notable here are the portraits, which extend around the great hall in lines of grave dignity; most of the paintings are by the best of the early American artists, and are priceless in that they bring down to posterity the appearance of the great men of the past, while at the same time the greater number are notable achievements of art as well.

Here is Thomas Hancock, worthy uncle of the patriotic and famous John; a painting by Copley, made in 1766. Hancock is standing on a floor of tessellated marble, and is gorgeous in showy clothing, and coat of bottle-green velvet, with ruffles at his wrists and ornate buckles on his shoes. And here is a fine Washington, by Trumbull, a portrait given to Harvard, while Washington was still alive, by that Craigie whom we have seen making money out of army medicines. And here is a John Adams by Copley; an Adams quite unknown to Boston—for he is represented in full court dress; a costume that in the early anti-English days he would scarcely have dared to wear. And here, too, is a painting understood to be a Benjamin Franklin, sent from England by Franklin

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

himself as a gift for his brother; but it does not at all meet the usual ideas of Franklin's appearance, as it shows him quite a youngish man with curly hair and bishop-like sleeves; it is with some difficulty that one realizes that Franklin was ever a youngish man, there being but two general impressions of him, one as a boy with a bun and the other as an aged philosopher. Here, too, is an excellent portrait by Chester Harding of that many-titled man, the Earl of Aberdeen, Viscount Gordon, Ambassador to Vienna, Prime Minister, and so on; one of the many notable paintings that this American artist from the backwoods made in England.

That the hall is rather dark adds materially to the general impressiveness, but does not make it a better medium for the display of old-time paintings; and besides, most of these paintings are skied on the lofty wall.

The social life of the university, at least from the standpoint of some of the newer members of the faculty, possesses a certain frigidness not incompatible with Boston and Cambridge social life in general. "The winter climate of Boston is distinctly arctic, and society life, from sympathy, perhaps, seems to pass through a long period of cold storage"; thus, toward the close of his long life, wrote the late Charles Francis Adams, who knew all that was to be known of the best of Boston and Cambridge society; and I thought of this when I was told, recently, of a call made upon the wife of a new professor by the wife of a professor of long standing. She found the younger

## “COLLEGES RED AND COMMON GREEN”

woman in tears. “Oh, I am so glad you came!” she sobbed. “Now—now—somebody knows me! I’ve been so lonely and I’ve been crying, for I thought that nobody knew me and—if I should die—there’d be nobody in Cambridge to come to my funeral!”

A happier story of social life was related to me, of an absent-minded professor who, at a dinner, was offered an ice served on a doily of exquisite workmanship, and taking it, but continuing his conversation, he absent-mindedly twisted the doily with his fork, round and round in the ice—and then swallowed it; to the amazed distress of his hostess!

Even from early days Cambridge has always seemed a part of Boston, and it is now, by means of rapid subway trains, really only a few minutes from Boston Common, and therefore seems more than ever a part of the big city. But the Cambridge people like to remain under a government of their own; only, it may not be amiss to suggest, altogether charming though that part of Cambridge is where stand the homes of Longfellow and Lowell, there is, in the center of the town and in its approaches from Boston, a little too much of shabbiness, a shabby and drab aspect associated with the old reputation of Cambridge for dust.

And yet, there is so much of charm about the place, there is so much of thrilling interest about it, in addition to its collegiate associations, that one wishes only to think of that summary of the place made long ago by one of the most distinguished of Americans:

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

“Nicest place that ever was seen,  
Colleges red and Common green,  
Sidewalks brownish with trees between.”

And the university itself remains a pleasant memory, with its throngs of Harvard men in the making; of whom I think it was a Bostonian who said, that you can always tell a Harvard man—but you can't tell him much!



## CHAPTER XIX

### AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE



NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE, master of the imaginatively romantic, tried to make his very life one of actual romance, and never more so than when, with the fire as if of romantic youth, although he was then well on toward forty, he flung himself and his little fortune into the adventure of Brook Farm.

Throughout his life he was eager to find the romance of actual living. His ideal days at the Old Manse, rambling in the woods and floating on the Concord or Assabeth, his life in romantic Italy, his love for the romantic countryside of England, his return, toward the close of his life, to the romantic surroundings of his beloved Concord—always he sought for the finest possible in life: he aimed for rugged independence but tried to achieve independence romantically. And the most romantic feature of his life was his connection with Brook Farm.

He did not start that remarkable movement. He had nothing to do with its inception. But in its possi-



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

bilities it so appealed to him that he went into it with enthusiastic buoyancy. Those who think of Hawthorne only as a cold and uncordial recluse miss altogether the Hawthorne who rowed and camped and talked with Ellery Channing; they miss altogether the Hawthorne who threw himself with unreserve into the experiment of Brook Farm.

George Ripley, a man of high ideals who had found it due to his own conscience to leave the ministry, was the founder. He dreamed of a community in which mental advancement and physical well-being would go hand in hand; he dreamt of a society of intelligent, cultured, cultivated people, who were to live together, with each one improving himself and all the others, and each one doing his share of the mental and physical toil which would be necessary to keep up the expenses of living. Life was to be simplified and made glorious. There was to be a school, and there were to be mechanical industries, and fruit and vegetables and milk were to be the product of their own farm. Each one, man or woman, was to do his share of work, physical and mental, and all were to participate in the mutual intellectual benefits of association. After the founding, by a little group of friends, no one was to be admitted without probation and a vote, and, thus safeguarded against undesirables and impracticables, the community was to represent the mental activity of a wide variety of thinkers in conjunction with the plain good sense of chosen farmers and mechanics. Each thinker was at the same time to be a worker, and each worker a thinker.

## AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE

The venture was begun in the spring of 1841. The shares were five hundred dollars each, and twenty-four were taken by the first group, the founders. And Hawthorne did not wait coldly to see if it were to be a success. He was eagerly ready to devote himself to the work and to associate with other chosen souls. Nor was his enthusiasm merely of the spirit; he showed it practically, with a pathetic earnestness. He had saved—he, the master of American fiction—he had saved one thousand dollars from his salary in the Boston Custom House, and this sum he paid in for two of the Brook Farm shares. There could be no deeper proof of his sincerity.

Hawthorne was even made chairman of the finance committee—the last position in the world, one would think, for so unworldly a man; and it is vastly interesting to know that, after paying \$10,500 for the property the committee promptly negotiated a mortgage loan of \$11,000 for the purpose of expenses and new buildings. A mortgage for more than the purchase price!

The Brook Farmers were to fleet the time carelessly, as they did in the golden world, but they were also to work. Charles A. Dana, then a young man, joined. George William Curtis joined. The man who was to achieve fame as Father Hecker, founder of the Paulists, joined. Ripley was the guiding spirit. Emerson looked on with sympathy and encouragement, even though Brook Farm did not draw him from his beloved Concord. Margaret Fuller did not join, but she lent to the community the frequent gleam of her personality. That Hawthorne daily milked a cow is one

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

of the joyful memories of the Farm, and that he playfully christened the cow Margaret Fuller, because of its intelligent face and reflective character, is another.

But Brook Farm was not a practical success. The land that Ripley had picked out was wretchedly poor for farming, nor were the mechanic industries, such as sash-making, at all prosperous. But for a while the effort went on nobly. There was wholesome life and companionship. Scholars and gentlemen hoed and plowed and milked; well-bred ladies washed clothes and scrubbed floors. The nights were filled with talk and music and cheerfulness. Some new buildings were erected, which seem, from descriptions, to have been more astonishingly ugly than could fairly have been expected of romantic philosophers, and perhaps it is well that they burned down, as they did, either while the Brook Farmers were there or in the years after their departure.

I think the fact that there were more men than women militated against success; and it seems surprising that more women did not join; with such men as Hawthorne and Dana and Ripley and Curtis there, it would seem that women would joyously have entered into the enthusiasm of it all. In this twentieth century they doubtless would, but in the 1840's women were still cabined, cribbed, confined.

It is interesting, and it is striking, that not one of the Brook Farmers ever admitted that Brook Farm was a failure. Of course, they admitted that the community broke up, and with financial loss, but all of

## AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE

the people connected with it, both men and women, always believed that there had, for all of them, been more of profit than of loss; each was sure that every one was benefited. It was really a glorious thing to do, a glorious effort to make.

Hawthorne himself, when at length he saw that the movement was doomed to failure, was wise enough to leave. He seems to be picturing himself when, in the novel that was one of the fruits of Brook Farm, the "Blithedale Romance," he represents Miles Coverdale, on the eve of his departure, thus setting down his thoughts of the people he was to meet out in the world, away from his companions at the Farm: "It was now time for me to go and hold a little talk with the conservatives, the writers of the *North American Review*, the merchants, the politicians, the Cambridge men, and all those respectable old blockheads who still kept a death-grip on one or two ideas which had not come into vogue since yesterday morning."

He left, and married the woman of his choice, and continued on his career of fame, winning more and more the reputation of being cold and repellent—which his associates at Brook Farm knew so well that he was not! And he wrote his novel of the place—the name of Blithedale itself declaring what charm and poetry he had found there—and he incorporated in that story the feeling of what Brook Farm had meant to him.

Brook Farm itself is still largely, in appearance, what it was when it knew the wonderful community. The spot is but ten or eleven miles from Boston Com-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

mon, yet urban and suburban development have alike missed it, except as to a gathering of cemeteries in the region close by. It is easily reachable, by train to West Roxbury, or even more conveniently by trolley. And there are still the traces of the main entrance and gateway; there is still the same general aspect, of walls trailed over with the scarlet barberry, of rolling meadows and woodland, of dips and hollows alternating with little heights, of pine trees, scattered or thickly massed.

A Lutheran Home stands on the spot where the main building of the farmers stood, and, such having been the fiery devastation, the only house standing that stood when they were there is a little place which somehow gained the name of "Margaret Fuller's cottage"; for the reason, as it was long ago quaintly said, that it was the only building there with which Margaret Fuller had nothing to do! But it was a building with which, undoubtedly, Hawthorne and Dana had to do, and probably all of them.

It stands on a still lonely spot; a small house, steep-roofed, four-gabled, of broad and unplanned clapboards, and with windows of so oddly unusual a size as to lead to the impression that the sash are probably some of the very sash that the Brook Farmers made and unsuccessfully tried to market.

Pictorial pudding-stones of enormous size dot the landscape—one marvels that with such outward and visible signs of an unkindly soil Ripley could ever have deceived himself and the others into faith that the land had possibilities!—and immediately in front of



## AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE

this cottage is such a stone, over six feet in height and of twice that length. All about stretches away a land without levels, with little pools in the hollows, with trees in clumps and singles and masses, with rocky rolling swells, and with the Charles flowing quietly by. And the breeze blowing across the meadows blows fresh from a land of pure romance.

About the same distance from the center of Boston as is Brook Farm, but off to the eastward, near the coast, are two small homes which also are important in New England history and which also stand for romance, though here the romance is of a different character, for it is the typically American romance of success, the romance of rising from humble surroundings to lofty place.

It is in Quincy that these two small homes stand, the little homes in which were born two men of American romance. And I do not mean John Hancock, although he was born in Quincy, for he was not of financially straitened ancestry; I mean those two Quincy-born men, John Adams and his son John Quincy Adams. And the town of Quincy is the only place that enjoys the honorable distinction of being the birth-place of two Presidents of the United States.

The houses in which these two Presidents that were to be, were born, are of rather humble type, but sweet and cheerful and comfortable, with an air, as it were, of self-respect. The two stand close to each other, almost touching shoulders. One looks first at the house in which John Adams was born, small and unimpressive as it is, and then at the house to which he took his

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

wife, a home just as simple, where their son John Quincy was born. It is amazing and it is inspiring to realize that from such homes men could rise to the highest places of leadership and to the very Presidency, and the close conjunction of the two houses adds much to the dramatic effect.

John Adams fell in love with a connection of the Quincys, a powerful and wealthy family, and they from the first discerned his unusual qualities and did not oppose the match, and the marriage was of great practical aid in his advancement. And his wife, Abigail Smith, instead of being one who was always urging him to extravagance or pretentiousness, as a daughter of the wealthy Quincys might so easily have been, was a woman of much good sense and of moderation. It is delightful to find her writing to him, when she learns that he is likely to be sent as ambassador abroad, and when it would be expected that she would eagerly urge such brilliant advancement, that "this little cottage has more heart-felt satisfaction for you than the most brilliant court can afford." And that this Abigail of the aristocrats was really a finely sturdy American was further shown in many ways, as by her answer to an Englishman, on the ship on which she herself crossed the ocean; for when he asked, over and over, what was the family of this or that American, she told him "that merit, not title, gave a man preëminence in our country; that I did not doubt it was a mortifying circumstance to the British nobility to find themselves so often defeated by mechanics and

## AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE

mere husbandmen; but that we esteemed it our glory to draw such characters not only into the field but into the senate.”

Adams, from such a humble birthplace and such a humble home, was quite equal to upholding his dignity and that of his country abroad, and to hold with honor the office of President of the United States. But it is rather amusing, and it is highly interesting, looking at these plain and little homes, to remember that, in a letter to his wife, in 1797, after his election to the Presidency, he wrote, addressing his wife as “My dearest friend,” a form in use at that period between married folk, and signing himself “Tenderly yours,” a form even yet not entirely gone out of fashion:

“I hope you will not communicate to anybody the hints I give you about our prospects; but they appear every day worse and worse. House rent at twenty-seven hundred dollars a year, fifteen hundred dollars for a carriage, one thousand for one pair of horses, all the glasses, ornaments, kitchen furniture, the best chairs, settees, plateaus, &c., all to purchase, and not a farthing probably will the House of Representatives allow, though the Senate have voted a small addition. All the linen besides. I shall not pretend to keep more than one pair of horses for a carriage, and one for a saddle. Secretaries, servants, wood, charities which are demanded as a right, and the million dittoes present such a prospect as is enough to disgust any one. Yet not one word must we say. We must stand our ground as long as we can.”

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

John Adams was very much of a man; and it should be remembered that it was he who, New Englander though he was, was broad enough to nominate, in the Continental Congress, George Washington to be commander-in-chief of the American forces. Jefferson said of John Adams that he was "our Colossus on the floor; not graceful, not elegant, not always fluent, but with power both of thought and of expression."

Adams and Jefferson, it will be remembered, both lived until the fiftieth anniversary of the event with which both had so much to do, the making of the Declaration; and both, by one of the most remarkable coincidences in history, died not only in 1826, the fiftieth year, but actually on July the Fourth.

The two Adamses, the two Presidents, father and son, were not only born in adjoining houses, but sleep their last sleep in adjoining tombs; for both lie in granite chambers beneath the portico of the Stone Temple, that fine-looking church, solid and of excellent proportions, with round-topped tower, which faces into Quincy Square.

There are at least three homes of the Quincy family in Quincy, but it is one in particular that is meant when the "Quincy homestead" is referred to by any one of the neighborhood. (The Massachusetts way of pronouncing "Quincy" is as if the family suffer from a well-known affection of the throat.)

The homestead is away from the thick-settled part of the city of Quincy, and is set nestlingly beside a stream, now little, which in the long ago was navigable

## AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE

for smallish boats. It is a great dormer-windowed mansion, quaint, rambling and romantic, with attractive roof lines, and is now in the possession of a patriotic society, and filled with its own furniture of the past. It is a house of innumerable spacious and low-ceilinged rooms; it was always an aristocrat's house, and presumably it was deemed none the less aristocratic from its owner being a bit of a buccaneer. It is a house of one romantic room after another; a house unusually full of charm, even compared with other ancient houses; a house dating back, as to its main portion, for over two centuries; that main part having incorporated within it a still earlier portion dating back into the sixteen hundreds. And it contains what seems surely the most elaborate and most cleverly constructed secret hiding space, between floors, in America, this space being an entire false room, entered by a secret entrance, and of quite unsuspected existence through any outward appearance, the room above it and the room below being reached separately from each other from another part of the house.

This building, so extremely interesting in appearance and age, possesses a definite interest in that it was the home of the two Dorothy Q.'s, those delightfully cognomened young women who float with that romantic designation through New England history and reminiscences. And the adherents of either one of the Dorothy Q.'s are always ready to do battle for her as being of more prominence than the other Dorothy Q. Perhaps none but New Englanders would be



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

interested in following out the precise genealogical lines, but at least one may say that the Dorothy Q. who is remembered because she figures pleasantly in American poetry, was born here in 1709, and that the other Dorothy Q. was born here some forty years later and became the wife of John Hancock.

A pleasant tradition still keeps in mind that it was in a room with a beautiful wallpaper newly imported from Paris that Hancock proposed to his Dorothy Q. and was accepted, and the very room is remembered and the very wallpaper is still on the walls; an oddly striking paper, with much of queer red in its composition and with little Cupids and Venuses often recurring.

A little farther along the coast, to the southward from Quincy, is Marshfield, long the beloved home of Daniel Webster, and where he died. To some extent the mighty Webster has already been forgotten; his immense and overshadowing fame has to quite a degree vanished; and this is largely owing to his having disappointed all New England by his ill-fated "Ichabod" speech on the subject of compromise with slavery. And that Whittier, a poet far from first-rate, could by his tremendous "Ichabod" lines be conqueror of one of the mighty orators of all history, shows curiously the essential strength of literature as compared with oratory. The people of New England could not forget that they had honored and trusted Webster absolutely, they could not but see that he acted against their profoundest principles; they might in time have

## AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE

forgiven, through realizing that Webster discerned, what they could not discern, how dreadful would be the impending conflict, and that it was because of this that he was willing to temporize. But Whittier wrote "Ichabod," and the proud crest of Webster sank.

Webster owned two thousand acres of land, bordering on the sea. Much was woodland; much was given over to fruit trees; he was an enthusiastic farmer and tree grower. Planted under his personal direction were fully a hundred thousand trees, and he had a great stock of pedigreed cattle, with many horses and even some llamas; he had poultry of the finest breeds, and even peacocks. He saw to the making of paths and pools and walls. He lived like a princely farmer, spending money with lavishness. But always first in his affection was the ocean, with its might and mystery.

His house was burned, some years after his death, and all the barns and outbuildings but a single tiny little one-story structure, really but a hut, which he sometimes used as an office or study, in accordance with the practice of the old-time New England lawyers. Another house has been built, but there is a general sense of something lost and wanting.

It is pleasant to know that Webster's own neighbors, his immediate friends, in Marshfield and Boston, were loyal to him at the last; it is pleasant to know that after his final speech, in Boston, in 1852, the year in which he died, a huge crowd followed him to his hotel in that city and that he was escorted by a thou-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

sand horsemen; it is pleasant to know that, going down to Marshfield, thousands and thousands met him, men and women and children, and that many of them accompanied him throughout the ten miles from the station to his home—there was then no nearer station—and that for all that distance the way was lined with his admirers, strewing garlands.

When he knew he was dying, he loved to look off toward the beloved ocean, and at night he loved to see the light that swung at the masthead of his yacht; and as Death crept nearer, he one day had himself placed at his door, while his cattle and horses were led by in a long procession.

On the very last of his days he was heard to murmur, "On the 24th of October all that is mortal of Daniel Webster will be no more." He was buried in his favorite costume, with blue coat with gilt buttons, with white cravat, with silk stockings, waistcoat, trousers, patent-leather shoes and gloves. And more than eight thousand people solemnly followed his body to the grave.

It is a lonely place, a spot of peculiar desolateness, where Webster lies buried. It is a long distance from any house; a little tablet by the roadside, near the house that has been built where his own home once stood, points the traveler down a pathway that winds far off to a distant burying-ground, upon a little bit of low-rising land, in the midst of a great salt-marsh meadow. It is desolate, it is lonely. Once an ancient little church stood beside this burying-ground, but it

## AN ADVENTURE IN PURE ROMANCE

long ago vanished, leaving no sign of why the few graves are here, although among them are some of very early Pilgrim stock. But the lonely graveyard is not neglected, and it is impressive in its barrenness, its desolation. In all, it is even beautiful here, with a strange and somber beauty.

One thinks of his triumphant oratory, his splendor, of the power he possessed, of the idolatry he inspired. And what superb poise the man possessed, whether one trusts to humorous stories or to grave! He could thrill immense audiences with a word, a gesture, even with his moments of stately silence. It might have been of the Orator instead of the Bellman that the poet wrote when he said: "They all praised to the skies—such a carriage, such ease and such grace! Such solemnity, too! One could see he was wise the moment one looked on his face!" That is just it: Webster not only was a great man, but he looked the part as much as any man ever did.

But there was also a cheerfully human side to him; with his friends, he was a delightful dinner companion and story-teller, cheerful and gay; yet even at dinner he did not forget his stately poise; I suppose he could not put it away even if he would; and one remembers the perhaps apocryphal tale of his carving, at dinner, and unfortunately letting the bird slip into his neighbor's lap, and of the booming intonation of his calm request, "May I trouble you for the turkey, madame?" And one remembers the immensely illustrative tale, not apocryphal, of Webster at the Jenny Lind con-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

cert in Boston, when the Swedish singer, aglow with happiness, came out and bowed to the great audience in response to tumultuous acclaim and the mighty Daniel arose in his place in the audience and returned the bow!





## CHAPTER XX

### A TOWN THAT WASHINGTON WANTED TO SEE



THE ancient Wayside Inn, at Sudbury, dates from the latter years of the 1600's; it is believed that at least a good part of it was built in 1688; and it was a well-known stopping place for generations before Longfellow put it into delightful verse. It stands on one of the main roads leading from the west to Boston, and Washington went past here, and probably halted for a little, and Knox and his Ticonderoga cannon went by these doors. It is distant from any town; it has always been notable among inns for its isolation; and, when railroads came, the nearest one, as if respecting decades of seclusion, remained a mile or more away, and thus the ancient inn is as isolated as ever it was, and has kept on adding to its aspect of mellow romance. And it is really so very romantic! It is stately fronted and very large; I feel sure that I have never seen an old gambrel-roofed house as large as this; it is peaceful, it is full of atmosphere, and its ancient rooms, its taproom and sitting-rooms and huge dining-room, are furnished with things of antique time.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

“As ancient is this hostelry as any in the land may be; built in the old Colonial day, when men lived in a grander way, with ampler hospitality”: Longfellow wrote of it with glowing appreciation, in those “Tales of a Wayside Inn” in which he fancied one after another of a group of friends telling stories there. But, although the plan of the many poems was fanciful, the friends to whom he imaginatively ascribed them were really friends of his. The poet was Parsons, the musician was Ole Bull, the Sicilian was Luigi Monti, the theologian, Professor Treadwell, the student, Henry Wales, the merchant, Israel Edrehi—an interesting group of friends, for a Cambridge poet!—and the landlord was Howe, one of a line of Howes who for many years were landlords in succession.

Longfellow, well as he knew the surroundings of Boston, knew nothing of the famous inn until told of it by that good angel of the Boston authors, James T. Fields! And yet, it is barely thirty miles from Boston. The old inn instantly appealed to Longfellow’s fancy, and without ever seeing it he began his tales, giving them the inn setting. Some time after that, on a day in 1862, Fields drove Longfellow out to the inn; had it not been for that, Longfellow would have been like most Bostonians, of his own day and of the present time, in never seeing the fine old place at all. It would not have checked Longfellow’s Wayside poems, however, not to have seen the Wayside! For it was an idiosyncrasy of his, frequently indulged, not to see places about which he wrote. It was in 1839 that he wrote of the “Reef of Norman’s Woe,” yet as long

## A TOWN WASHINGTON WANTED TO SEE

after as 1878 he wrote to Elizabeth Stuart Phelps that he had "never seen those fatal rocks," though they are right at Boston's door! Longfellow was a great traveler, too; it was not that he was a stay-at-home. Yet I have seen it stated that he never saw Acadia, to which so many thousands pilgrimage to do him honor! One does not quite like to inquire whether or not he ever saw the definite localities of Miles Standish and John Alden.

It is not alone the houses and places definitely connected with great events of the past, or with great authors, that are of interest. The spirit of the past is often finely represented by old houses which are without great associations, but are fascinatingly mellowed by the salt and savor of time. The ancient Wayside Inn, rich in its associations with Longfellow's admirably told tales, would have had great fascination even without them.

New England still possesses a number of very old houses, delightful in their general presentation of the past, without needing much of definitely great associations. There is the Royall house at Medford, one of the oldest houses still standing in this old country of ours, built, the greater part of it, in the early 1700's, but with part of it probably dating back into the previous century. Nothing is more difficult, in most cases, than to fix upon the precise building date of an old house, and the difficulty is greater if the house has passed through the hands of various families, and in addition has been altered or enlarged. In most cases, when a house, now old, was built, no one was thinking

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

of far-distant future interest in the precise date of construction. Sometimes, when a house was built, the date was set up in a corner of the gable; sometimes the date seen in a gable represents the date of an addition or is a modern guess at the date of the original building. Most often there was no marking whatever, and ancient deeds of real-estate seldom throw light on the subject, because they mention the land alone or may refer to an earlier house.

The Royall house is one of the most interesting in appearance of old New England houses. Although it is a village house, not a house on an isolated estate, it is more retired and exclusive in its situation than was the case with New England village or town houses in general, which were mostly set near a main street or road. A great open space is still retained about this Royall house, with great old trees, with shrubs, with part of an ancient lilac hedge with white and purple flowers, with the marks of ancient paths and driveways, with even the ghost of a garden still retained within the fragmentary boundary of an ancient wall of brick.

Near the old house there is a little ancient building which it is well to look at, for it represents a feature of early New England life; for this little building, believed to be the only one of its kind still standing in Massachusetts, was the quarters of the slaves!—of whom, so records tell, twenty-seven were owned by the master of this Royall house, in 1732.

The Royall house is a house with two fronts: either back or front may almost be termed the front; and

## A TOWN WASHINGTON WANTED TO SEE

it is a big house, with fine doorways and windows. And that there is record of twenty-one weddings known to have been solemnized within this ancient home is quite as important as if it had been a rendezvous for soldiers or had sheltered some fleeing patriot or Royalist. As a matter of fact, the owner, when the Revolution came, was a Royalist who fled to Halifax and England; he yearned deeply to return to the stately house, set in its stately environment of trees and garden and grass, but he died an exile, before the war came to an end.

The house is maintained by one of the patriotic societies and is furnished throughout with the furniture of the past: and in a corner stands a chest, of greenish Chinese lacquer, an odd-looking, unexpected thing to be there: and you learn that it is reputed to be one of the very chests thrown into the harbor at the Boston Tea Party, and picked up, afterwards, floating in the water.

There is a staircase of delightfulness, with newel-post and balusters exquisitely fine; there are notably beautiful interior pilasters in the upper hall; there are paneling and window seats and fireplaces and cornicing and a secret stair: there is abundance of rambling roominess and everywhere are the belongings and the very atmosphere of the past. For such houses are in themselves the very past.

It is near the Mystic: a quiet stream, sedate and solemn, slowly winding its way in sweeping bends through marshy levels to the sea. In this house General Stark early made his headquarters; and his wife,



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

pleasantly remembered as "Molly Stark," watched from the roof the topmasts of the British ships, in the distance, as they moved out of the harbor at the evacuation of Boston.

Also on the Mystic, and not more than two miles or so from this house of the Royalls, is a house still older, the Cradock house. On the way to this house one passes an ancient-looking little shipyard, whose little ships poke their bowsprits out over the very sidewalk.

From the foreground of the Cradock house and of several oldish houses that neighbor it, the salt marshes of the Mystic stretch away into the distance, and far off, above them, rises the city of Boston, on its hill. A mist was gently falling, as I looked, and it dimmed the stream and the marshes with mystery—all was becoming literally Mystic!—and the mist came sweeping softly toward the ancient Cradock house, and wrapped it as in the mist that comes with the centuries.

The house is of red brick, and stands on a low knoll, and is admirable in shape, with its gambrel-end of felicitousness, and its many-paned windows, and the little oval windows at the side. Vines clamber thickly upon it, and although it is somewhat spoiled by inferior immediate surroundings, it is itself fine and sweet, it is itself a notable survival, standing so happily on its knoll and looking off toward Boston.

This Cradock house, in Medford—easily reachable by trolley—is remindful of another and still more fascinating house, of about the same date; a house

## A TOWN WASHINGTON WANTED TO SEE

which, indeed, looks the older of the two, and probably is: the Fairbanks house at Dedham: and this also may be readily reached by trolley. And I mention this because train service is often inconvenient, to many a point, and because not every tourist goes about with a motor car.

The Fairbanks house is of three periods, all of them, so it is believed, in the 1600's! The middle and oldest portion of the building dates back to before 1650, and it very likely deserves the honor of being the oldest house in New England, although, as has been mentioned, the precise dating of ancient homes is a doubtful matter.

The first impression is of an entrancing medley of roof lines: literally of roofs; there seems to be nothing but roofs!—for the roofs of the center and the wings come, alike, almost to the very ground. The general aspect of the house is positively fascinating: it is so rambling, so long, so romantic, so fetching, as it stands on its slight rise of land, shaded and sheltered by giant hoary trees. There is no other house in New England which more satisfactorily represents very early America. It is not the grandest of early houses, but it is thoroughly homelike, thoroughly attractive, a Puritan homestead. It stands at the junction of two highways, and its approach, from Boston, is through an avenue of giant willows that archingly intermingle their branches above the road. And the house is forever protected, by having been purchased by the Fairbanks Family of the United States, incorporated for the purpose.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

The ancient town of Marblehead possesses the house, the Lee mansion, the home of Colonel Jeremiah Lee, which in costliness of interior finish of a home stands first among the pre-Revolutionary mansions of New England. It was built less than ten years before the beginning of the Revolution, and is said to have cost the sum, at that time deemed enormous for a house, of ten thousand pounds. That Washington was received here as an honored guest, that subsequently Lafayette was received here, that at a still later date Andrew Jackson was a guest, are but casual claims to fame; the chief claim is the house itself, in its stately beauty and dignity.

But in the first place one notices that it stands near the sidewalk, with distinctionless houses close on either hand, and that ordinary houses face it from across the narrow way. Costly as was this mansion, the home of a merchant who owned a hundred ships and was of high social standing, there was never the slightest attempt at aristocratic exclusiveness, or to have it one of a number of houses in joint aristocratic environment, as with the superb houses of Chestnut Street in nearby Salem. A few other rich houses are in the neighborhood, but they, like the Lee mansion, are closely surrounded by the homes of the butcher, the baker, the candlestick maker.

It should be remembered that the wealthy colonel, the owner of this house, gave his life for his country. He was searched for by the British, at the very beginning of the Revolutionary struggle, as he was one of an active committee of safety. The British, on

## A TOWN WASHINGTON WANTED TO SEE

their night march to Lexington, passed near a house where the committeemen were gathered, and Lee, with one or two others, lay in a field, in hiding, for some hours, and he shortly afterwards died from that exposure. Well, he gave his life for his country. But what an opportunity he missed! He was a colonel, a man of affairs, a leader; he could have won immortal renown had he headed the farmers against the British, instead of fleeing and getting his death from the chill of a night in early spring; and he let the farmers win immortality without any leader of prominence. Like John Hancock and Samuel Adams, Colonel Lee, after getting other men to fight, fled from the actual conflict; even though, also as with Adams and Hancock, on that night before Lexington and Concord, the British soldiers were so close upon him that it was with difficulty he got away. Had he accepted the opportunity that Fate was trying to force upon him he might not only have won splendid fame, but might have lived after the war, for years, in his splendid home.

The mansion, now maintained by the Marblehead Historical Society, is entered through a superb portico and a superb ten-paneled door. The hall is noble in proportions and size, being forty-two feet long and sixteen feet in width. The stairway is of the noble width of six feet and eleven inches, and rises in stately ease, with beautifully twirled banisters of mahogany. The stair turns, at a landing, where there is a wonderful beehive window and a felicitous windowseat, with a pair of beautiful pilasters at

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

either side. I do not remember any staircase and landing to equal the beauty, the serenity, the nobility of this, in any, even of the grandest, of other Colonial houses, South or North. The house is rich in paneling, and one of the finest rooms is paneled in solid mahogany. And a strikingly distinguished feature is the wallpaper of the hall; huge pictured paper, still in perfect preservation, showing great classical landscapes, in black on cream-colored ground, with temples and arches and streams. This magnificent paper antedates the Revolution and is supposed to have been made by an Italian in London.

Within sight of the Lee mansion is that of Lee's brother-in-law, "King" Hooper, as he was called from his wealth and magnificence; he was another merchant prince, and the house is especially notable from the fine banquet hall, still preserved, in the upper story of the big building. And not far away is another Lee mansion, the home of a brother of Colonel Lee.

Marblehead is a town of old houses, although most of them are of a far more modest kind than these great mansions. And it is an interesting town in its general aspect of the olden-time. "The strange, old-fashioned, silent town—the wooden houses, quaint and brown"; and indeed it is a study in browns! And in its older portion, beside the shore, it is still little more than a maze of paths and byways, of narrow streets incredibly twisting. Houses are set down at all sorts of angles, shouldering one another into or away from the roadways. Many of these houses



## A TOWN WASHINGTON WANTED TO SEE

are ancient, and there is still in use a fascinating, ancient-looking shipyard, with high-perched ships under construction, directly on the line of one of the streets, as with the one at Medford; it is a yard full of ships and chips. And there are black rocks, with black pools among them, and a rocky shore; and there is a broad stretch of harbor, thick-dotted with fishing boats. The people who live in this most old-fashioned portion of the town are still full of old-fashioned ways and beliefs, and many of them have actually heard the shrieking woman: the ghost of a woman who was put to death by Spanish pirates at what is now called Oakum Bay, and who shrilly shrieks on the yearly night of her murder, just as she shrieked in actuality, dismally rousing the town from its slumber, so long ago.

George Washington was especially desirous of seeing Marblehead, on the journey that he made to Massachusetts in 1789; I say "especially," not that he gave any reason, but because in his diary he singled the place out for mention as one to which he wished to go; and it was an extremely unusual thing for him thus to write of any place. Going to Salem, he detoured to Marblehead, "which is four miles out of the way, but I wanted to see it." It is rather tantalizing that, after so writing, he kept his impressions of the place to himself!

Perhaps he went to Marblehead because it was the home town of the gallant General Glover, who did so much at Long Island and the Delaware. And the home of Glover is still preserved. It is up one of the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

crookedest and narrowest of the lanes, a stone's throw from the water's edge, in the heart of an ancient nautical neighborhood; it is a white house, with fine doorway and gambrel roof, and has a fine aspect of dignity.

Here in Marblehead still stands the house in which lived Captain Blackler, one of General Glover's men, who was intrusted by Glover with the command of the very boat in which Washington crossed the Delaware! And compared with such a memory, how little does it matter that this house of Blackler's was also the birthplace of Elbridge Gerry!

Marblehead is mainly known, to many people, from the stirring lines depicting Skipper Ireson, Whittier having lived in the town for a time and having become saturated with the legends and spirit of the place. But Marblehead does not relish the lines, picturing, as they do, the supposed cowardice of one of its captains, and has striven hard to throw off the odium by claiming that it was not Skipper Ireson's wish to desert the ship that asked for aid, but that he followed the united demand of his crew; an amusing defense of the honor of the town, to put the blame on many rather than on one! It has seemed to me that the endeavor to reject the story has really been more on account of the desire to throw aside the odium of Marblehead's women engaging in the pastime of tarring and feathering, a sport supposed to have been left to men. But New England women did early do tarring and feathering on occasion, as in a case mentioned by Baroness Riedesel, in her memoirs, as hav-

## A TOWN WASHINGTON WANTED TO SEE

ing occurred in Boston, a case in which a party of Boston women seized the wife and daughter of a self-exiled loyalist and tarred and feathered them and led them through the city. I am afraid that a good many things that were not very pretty took place in the good old days.

So far as bravery is concerned, Marblehead needs no defender; Ireson was an exception—or his men were exceptions, if the town prefers to put it that way. Marblehead is said to have given more men to the Revolutionary army, in proportion to the population, than any other town in America; and it was not only quantity of men but quality; Marblehead men were famed for bravery. It was to a Marblehead man, in his armed schooner, that, in 1775, the first British flag was struck. And some Marblehead men sailed into the St. Lawrence, also before 1775 was over, and not only captured English boats, but actually landed on Prince Edward's Island and made the governor a prisoner. But the list of the Marblehead brave is too long to name.

The old Town House of Marblehead still stands, full of years and memories. And there still stands the home of a certain Moses Pickett who, reputed a miser and dying in 1853, left his house and his entire little fortune for the poor widows of the town, thus with his thirteen thousand dollars doing far more good in the world than many a wealthy man has done by blindly throwing away millions. And here is still standing the home of that Captain Creesy who, with the *Flying Cloud*, won the reputation of being the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

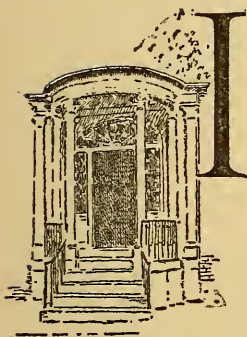
best skipper, with the fleetest sailing ship, in the world. And here is the house in which the famous jurist, Judge Story, was born.

A church is still standing, St. Michael's, which is over two hundred years old, but it has been considerably altered from its original appearance. And there is a delightful association connected with it. For an early rector of this church left it to take, instead, a church in Virginia, and while in Virginia he was called upon to marry two people who came to be a very prominent couple in the eyes of the world—for they were George Washington and the Widow Custis!



## CHAPTER XXI

### THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM



**I**N the minds of many, Salem is chiefly notable on account of Hawthorne; in the minds of others the city is equally notable on account of the witches; yet most of the Salem people themselves do not relish any talk of witches; in their treatment of which unfortunates, after all, this city only followed the example set by Boston; and as to Hawthorne, he for his part frankly disliked pretty much everything connected with the place even though he was born in Salem and achieved his greatest triumph while he lived there.

The ancient house where Hawthorne was born on the patriotic day of July 4th, 1804, at 27 Union Street, is still preserved, and it is a house that could never have been very attractive, and is situated in a faded quarter of the town which was never of the best.

Salem was settled at about the same time as Boston, but a little earlier than the big neighbor that was to outgrow it; it was settled almost ten years after the landing of the Pilgrims at Plymouth; and among the various and notable things in the long history of Salem



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

there has been nothing finer than its standing undauntedly by Boston when Boston's port was closed in punishment for unrest and outspokenness shortly before the beginning of the Revolution; Salem might have profited by a rival's misfortune, but would not, and nobly set forth, in formally phrased declaration, that "We must be dead to every idea of justice, lost to all feelings of humanity, could we indulge a thought to raise our fortunes on the ruin of our suffering neighbors."

Hawthorne lived in Salem in several different houses in turn, and in one of these houses, the house on Herbert Street where he lived as a boy and as a young man, and twice at different periods afterwards, he wrote, in 1840, "If ever I should have a biographer he ought to make great mention of this chamber in my memoirs, because here my mind and character were formed. By and by, the world found me out in my lonely chamber"; and it was of this Herbert Street house that he wrote, "In this dismal chamber Fame was won." Future fame, in the person of another, had certainly found him out as far back as when he was a boy, when he lived in this Herbert Street house, for at one time, when he was kept from school through having hurt his foot, his kindly school-teacher came here to call upon him, this quiet school-teacher being a man of the name of Worcester, himself to be famous as the author of a dictionary honored on both sides of the Atlantic!

In his earlier years and well into middle life Hawthorne had no doubt of his claims to high literary fame,

## THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM

but, as with many another author, doubts came to him with lack of financial returns, and when, at the age of forty-five, he wrote his masterpiece, he was so afraid that it was a failure that he actually feared to show it; he had had so little of practical success that he could not believe that he had really written a book that was even worth looking at; he was utterly downhearted; and this brought about the most interesting happening in the entire history of this town of Salem, the discovery of the "Scarlet Letter." And I do not mean the supposititious discovery, by the author, of the letter itself, but the actual discovery of the novel by the publisher.

James T. Fields came out here to Salem to see Hawthorne one day in 1849, when Hawthorne was living at 14 Mall Street, and encouragingly asked for material for a book, to which Hawthorne only replied, gloomily, that he had been doing nothing. "And who would publish a book by such an unpopular author as I am?" he demanded. Whereupon, "I would," promptly responded Fields. His publishing instinct told him that Hawthorne had really been at work and had something ready. "You have a book already completed," he insisted, in spite of the author's demurs; and at length Hawthorne reluctantly admitted that he had really been writing something and that it was enough for a book. And he reluctantly took from a drawer the manuscript of the greatest of all American stories.

Fields took it with joy, hurried with it back to Boston, sat up that night to read it, realized its greatness, and hurried back next day, aglow with enthusiasm.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

He found Hawthorne still discouraged, awaiting his report on the story, but the discouragement swiftly vanished when he found that Fields was bubbling over with energy and happiness, and eager to make a contract for the book's publication. And that was how the "Scarlet Letter" saw the light.

Previous to this inspiration and encouragement on the part of Hawthorne's publisher there had been the encouragement and inspiration of Hawthorne's wife. For when, downhearted, thinking that without a salary he could not live, he had gone home to her with the news that he had lost the place in the Salem Custom House that had come to him from the friendship of his old-time college-mate, President Pierce, his wife neither joined him in repining nor urged him to seek some other salaried place, but, instead, put down before him money that she had been saving, unknown to him, from the domestic allowance, and said cheerfully, "Now, you can write your novel." It was under that inspiration that he wrote it, and when, the work done, fear came upon him that it was not good, it was from his publisher's inspiration that it saw the light. In all, a strange story of literature and of Salem!

Near the waterside, in the older part of the city, looking out at a lovely view across the water of the harbor and off toward the broad Atlantic, is an ancient, nestled, low-set house, with ancient stack-chimney of brick; a house overhung by great trees and pleasantly surrounded with grass, and reached by a little private-looking lane known as Turner Street, which leads down from a main thoroughfare. Haw-

## THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM

thorne wrote of this house, which even when he wrote was about a century and three quarters old, and he gave it fame as the "House of the Seven Gables."

Within my own memory this house had only five gables, in spite of its fame-given seven and its actual present seven, for it has not only been restored and kept in repair on account of its association with Hawthorne, but an architect discovered, or thought he discovered, that it originally had seven gables, just as Hawthorne described it, and so the necessary two were built out again! And a wonderful roof-line the house has, with its clustered gables and that old central chimney, "stacked" like those of Tudor days. Perhaps it was not altogether desirable to put on the two gables; Hawthorne had no desire to have the house precisely match his description; he pictured it in his imagination and that was quite enough. Hepzibah's "cent shop" has also been given to the building, and its interesting old rooms are open to the public for a small fee.

Hawthorne began to write the "Scarlet Letter" at a high desk in the Custom House, a satisfactory, good-looking, old square building down near the waterfront, while he held the appointment of surveyor for the port of Salem, and it was after he lost that official position that he finished the story.

Hawthorne felt very critical toward the people of Salem, not having found precisely congenial surroundings there, even though it was in Salem that fame came to him, with some of his early work, and even though his wife was a young woman of Salem. He kept very

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

much to himself while he lived in that town, at least in his maturer years, and his attitude is expressed by a letter in which he comments on an invitation which he has just received, for his unsocial expression is, "Why will not people let poor persecuted me alone?" It need not be thought that he was a recluse, but at no time in his life did he care to spend time with people who did not interest him.

Hawthorne has somehow managed to offer for future generations such an atmosphere and detail of the past of old Salem, and thereby of all of old New England, as shows us the very life and feeling of the ancient time. He could see and feel the fine old romance of the past, the charm of it, the beauty of it, and he could also see the vivid human nature of it. And Salem could never quite forgive him that he recognized also the impermanence of much that was so good in it, and that in that very town he discerned what he termed "worm-eaten aristocracy." It was his ability to see and to feel the past not only in its romantic colors but in its entirety that made it possible for him to write his greatest works, "The Scarlet Letter" and "The House of the Seven Gables."

One's first impression of Salem is that it is rather an uninteresting place, for the entire central district near the railway station has been made unattractively brick-red and modern; but by getting away from this central region, one finds that there is still left very much of the interesting.

Gallows Hill, on which the witches were hanged, is a hill that seems to be a solid rock, at the edge of the



## THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM

town, bare of trees but covered with grass and dwarf sumac. The actual place where the gallows stood has been forgotten, but the general position is remembered and avoided, and the city itself owns the land. Not far away, however, quite a settlement has grown up and the people who live there have formed themselves, with cheerful bravado, into a Gallows Hill Association, and when the children of Salem not long ago paraded in a pageant, those from this part of the city dressed themselves proudly as little witches.

At the court house in Salem, some ancient witchcraft mementoes are preserved, including some of the "witch pins" that figured in the evidence, and the curious death warrant that directed the sheriff to hang one of the witches until "dead and buried"—which was an unintentional order to carry vengeance beyond the grave.

Under the old English Common Law, which was in force in America until modified by local laws, conviction for felony involved confiscation of property, but there was no provision for procuring conviction in case the accused refused to plead. Nowadays, in case of such refusal the court enters "Not Guilty," but formerly there was nothing to do but try to force a plea by the frightfully painful method known as *peine forte et dure*, which was the heaping of stones and weights upon a man's chest until he yielded or died. If a man was brave enough to bear the torture to the bitter end, he could not be convicted, and there could be no forfeiture, whereupon his heirs inherited his property; and now and then a man actually bore the pain to win

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

that result. In all American history there has been but one example of *peine forte et dure*. Giles Corey, accused at Salem of witchcraft, and knowing that if he stood trial he was certain, in those days of blind excitement, to be convicted, refused to plead and heroically bore the punishment of pressing to death.

There can be no possible appreciation of Salem without going from end to end of Chestnut Street. Yet even a mention of this street is likely to be omitted in Salem guide-books, merely because no incident ever happened there. But no greater mistake can be made by any one who wishes to understand the past than to look only at places connected with definite occurrences, for the history of the past and the interest of the past often lie even more deeply in houses and localities that only represent the past with indirectness. And Chestnut Street is in itself a remarkable American street.

Among the most interesting streets in America are Chestnut Street of Salem, Chestnut Street of Boston, and Chestnut Street of Philadelphia, and each of these has justly been deemed a street with much of the old American charm of architecture, each has been a stronghold of aristocratic living, each has still much of the flavor of the past, each is a street of houses of beauty and good taste, and all these three Chestnut Streets still preserve a great degree of their original felicitousness, even though the greater part of the Chestnut Street of Philadelphia has lapsed into business.

Salem is proud in the belief that of the three Chest-

## THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM

nut Streets its own has always been the best; and it really has been, and that is a great deal to say of even the best street of a little city like Salem. These Salem houses on Chestnut Street were built in the first quarter of the 1800's by the rich merchants of that period, and there is not only a superb line of mansions, well kept up, but also even more superb lines of huge trees, glorious trees, trees that splendidly overarch the entire length of the street, the houses themselves being just far enough back from the sidewalk line to permit of the complete rounding of the shapes of the trees. One cannot well be too enthusiastic, too appreciative, of this street of mansions, fine American in style as they are, and designed, most of them, by the Salem architect, McIntire, or at least built under his influence. It is the finest street, taken in all, of any of the streets of old-time mansions in America, and the double line of old mansions is remarkably unbroken.

Toward the other end of the city, with staid old homes built about it, is Washington Square, with its iron-railed and elm-bordered training-green. The houses of wealth and dignity that front this green are of the same general period as those of Chestnut Street, and both of these sections show the fine and even magnificent living of the period of Salem's highest prosperity, when her great shipping fortunes were made; and, indeed, by far the greater part of the fortunes of New England had their origin in the glorious days of American shipping.

As one goes about Salem, the first impression that there is little of interest here entirely disappears; one

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

forgets entirely the portions that at first jarred expectation; and there comes the full understanding that the city is remarkably rich in interesting houses of the past. And it is one of the chief charms of the place that upon these houses of the past the hand of the restorer has been but lightly laid, and that they remain as their builders intended them to remain.

One of the most interesting of the many old houses is the Pickering house on Broad Street, a particularly attractive home that has stood there for two and a half centuries; it has actually stood, right here in Salem, since the later years of the time of Cromwell, or at least since 1660, the year of the restoration of the Stuarts! How unexpectedly far away this seems, for America, even after one has come to a realization that this is not a new country! For it is hard to realize that actual living was so fixed and comfortable here so long, long ago. This Pickering house is still preserved and cared for by Pickering descendants, and the building serves to keep in mind not only the general charm and interest of the charming and interesting past, but the career of a particular Pickering who was born in this house and who won unique honors—that Timothy Pickering who, as a right brave fighter, was an officer at the battles of Germantown and Brandywine, who, as a legislator, was successively representative and senator, and who, in Washington's Cabinet, was given the successively high distinctions of being postmaster-general, secretary of war and secretary of state.

The best parts of Salem are interesting not only be-

## THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM

cause of the admirable buildings but because of the not infrequent fine and planned harmony of mansion and carriage-house and garden, arranged and designed as a complete whole. There is a house at 80 Federal Street which, with its surroundings, is a particularly good example, a house built in 1782, a house which ought to be seen by any visitor; it is of fine New England architecture, and I remember its doorway as a work of special beauty; and it has carved urns of most admirable classic design on its gateposts, showing how very beautiful may be a plain gateway with posts and ornaments of wood; and this house, with its garden and adjuncts, is one of the excellent examples of harmonized planning.

More than most other Eastern cities Salem offers direct inspiration for visitors from the West, because from the first it has been built with detached homes, each with grass plot and garden, instead of with houses ranged closely, shoulder to shoulder, as in Boston, New York and Philadelphia.

One of the most famous of naval fights, that between the *Chesapeake* and *Shannon*, the gallant "Don't give up the ship!" action, was fought so near Salem, just off its harbor, that the heights along the shore were thronged with Salem people who watched the progress of the battle with eager suspense. Always a brave city, this; a city ready to encourage others in bravery and to do brave things itself. It is said that in the War of 1812 forty armored vessels of the two hundred and fifty furnished by the entire country were from Salem. And the mettle of Salem was shown in the



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

brave way in which it faced the devastation of the fire of 1914, that swept away hundreds of houses; for instead of helplessly yielding to what might well have seemed an irreparable disaster, the city began at once, and on a broad scale, the task of rebuilding.

A fortunate thing with that fire was that with few exceptions it did not take away the old-time buildings of the city. They still remain. In fact, there is no better place, and there is probably no place even as good except a remote town like Guilford in Connecticut, where the various styles and periods of American buildings may be seen. Salem still has houses of the 1600's, with their overhanging stories and stack chimneys; it has houses of the 1700's, with their gambrel roofs or roofs of double pitch; it has the great square-fronted stately houses of the period from 1790 to 1825. Those who would study the old houses of America should go to Salem.

And there is many a little detail here, too, that is noticeable, as well as the houses themselves; for example, all over Salem there is the opportunity to see excellent designs in old-time door-knockers.

The Ropes mansion, a house of the 1700's, is interesting both in itself and in the way in which it has been preserved, for it is an endowed memorial of the past, left by its late owner to be kept, with all of its old furniture and with its garden planned as an old-fashioned garden of finest type, not as a museum held by one of the patriotic societies, but as a possession of the public into which the public may freely go. The house, with its belongings, is forever to be shown to one generation

## THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM

after another, with no chance of being sold or torn down at the whim of some tasteless heir.

Yet, if all these old houses, with their wealth of old belongings, should be destroyed, the Salem of the past would still be represented if it should still retain the treasures of its Essex Institute. The building that holds these treasures is a three-story structure of generous proportions, standing near the center of the city, on Essex Street; and that where this house now stands there once stood the house of a man named Downing, is remindful of one of the romantic facts in regard to early America. For the son of this Downing went over from here to London and became so strong a friend of Cromwell as to be made Minister to The Hague, and then by a swift transfer of allegiance, in order to retain his ambassadorship, he swung over to the cause of Charles the Second; and eventually he gave name to Downing Street; that street of all streets that is most typical of the English, the street whose name typifies the English government itself!

The Essex Institute holds, in itself, Old Salem. Enter the door—and the building is freely open to entrance by any one who is interested—and instantly you are generations away from the present, for there is nothing that does not tell of the past, and the past is shown with infinite picturesqueness and particularity. There is a great central portion, and there are little alcoved rooms full-furnished as rooms of the olden time, all in immaculate ship-shape order. There are paintings of the men and women of the past; there are the very costumes that they wore, the gowns, the bon-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

nets, the coats, the waistcoats; there are wedding gowns and there are uniforms and there are the very looking-glasses in which those old-timers saw the reflection of their faces. Here are the very glasses from which they drank and the very dishes from which they ate; and these are preserved in amazingly great quantity and in amazingly good condition; and glass collectors would like to know that one item alone is of some one hundred and fifty cup-plates of glass of Sandwich make!

Here in Essex Institute is the furniture of our forefathers, tables and sideboards and chairs, and among them is a black, heavy three-slat chair with high-turned posts which was the favorite chair of that beloved Mary English, who, with her husband, the richest shipowner of Salem, had to flee from Massachusetts for very life under the shadow of witchcraft accusation; and this excellent old chair seems to stand as a reminder that neither wealth nor high character nor charm of manner nor social position can be relied upon to check a popular delusion.

On the whole, the relics are remindful of a cheerful past, a happy, bright, refreshing, pleasant past; and the surprising number of spinets that have been preserved would alone show that the early days were far from being days of mere gloom and severity.

But not only the personal belongings of the past, and the furnishings of the old buildings, are preserved, here at the Essex Institute, and not only is there a delightful old house of the seventeenth century, with overhanging second-story and peaked roof-windows,

## THE FAMOUS OLD SEAPORT OF SALEM

actually within the grounds of the Institute, but fascinatingly among the possessions of the museum are portions of old houses that have been destroyed: for here are pilasters and balusters, pillars and window-tops, here are the very cornices of rooms, here are the essential fragments of buildings that have gone. It would seem as if not only in cases of demolition of old houses, but in the fewer cases of restoration and "improvement," the Institute has been on the watch for treasure. Some time ago the old house in which Hawthorne was born had some of its window sash replaced by larger panes—and the little window through which the eyes of Hawthorne first looked forth to the sky and the great world is preserved at the Essex Institute.

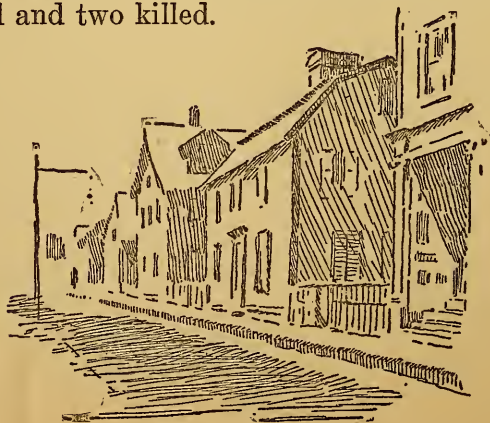
A few miles from Salem, out beyond Danvers, is the old Putnam homestead; a sturdy old house, gambrel-roofed, and built around a great central chimney. Spacious rooms, great fireplaces, old sideboard, sofa and chairs, old-time portraits and silhouettes, all tell of the long-past time. Here many a Putnam was born, including the famous General Israel Putnam, "Old Put," who so bravely galloped down the stone steps in Connecticut and who left a general impression of going gallantly galloping through the entire Revolution. Putnams still live in the old house, and the present small-boy Putnam has the big, frank, blue eyes of the distinguished Israel.

There is an inclosing tall thorn hedge, and the house is shaded by great elms and by a monster willow tree that was anciently planted by a Putnam slave. The house is away from the center of Danvers, in a charm-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

ing region of hills and dales and stone walls and apple orchards; it is a countryside not greatly changed since the Revolution—except that the State has set a monstrous ugly asylum on a hilltop near by; a poor return for the loyalty of the Putnams.

And what a wonderful family these New England Putnams—who changed their name from the English form of Puttenham—were! It is believed that they gave more men to the Union army, in the Civil War, than did any other single family; it seems even more sure that they gave more men to the Revolutionary army than did any other family; and on the great day of Lexington and Concord there were more Putnams than men of any other name who eagerly hurried to take part in the conflict. Seventy-five Putnams, all supposed to be connections, from various Putnam homes, responded to the call that day; the more distant could not come up till the British were back within the Boston lines, but many arrived before that—and the family toll for that very first day was one wounded and two killed.





## CHAPTER XXII

### THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA



THE road between Boston and Concord is the most important in America, for it was on this road that America was made. The halt of the British troops at Lexington long enough to fire the first fatal shots, their advance to Concord, the brief contest there and the beginning of the flight, their second arrival at Lexington, where they cast themselves down with their tongues hanging out like those of dogs after a chase, as a British account had it, then the flight on to Boston, with the British constantly dropping under the fire of the sharpshooters—that day and that road marked not only the beginning of the war, but foretold its close. The clear-sighted Burgoyne wrote of the fight at Lexington that, although it was but a skirmish, in its consequences it was as decisive as the battle of Pharsalia.

As if to make the day in every respect typical, the most prominent of the English was the gallant Percy, later to be Duke of Northumberland and master of countless miles of countryside and of Alnwick, one of the greatest castles in the world. But the English sol-

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

diers, though thus led by one of the proudest of the English peerage, fell back in rout; neither English peerage nor English soldiers were to be masters in America.

That day, the 19th of April, 1775, was curiously the day of the white horse. It was a white horse that the future Duke of Northumberland rode, as he galloped here and there along the frightened line, exposing himself freely to the fire of the farmers. And most marked among the Americans was a gray-haired farmer on a white horse; Wyman of Woburn—how Scott would have loved such a man and such a name! And during the miles of retreat, and to the very edge of Boston, Wyman of Woburn seemed like a pursuing fate, as safe from English shot, on his white horse, as was Percy from American shot on his, but galloping across fields and over the low slopes, setting his horse at the stone walls, time and again firing with such unerring aim that an appalling cry of dread of him went through the British ranks.

It is difficult, at this day, to realize what bravery was required to stand up against the British troops. It was not only resistance to apparently overwhelming authority, not only resistance to the British government, but resistance to the King, at a time when the brief episode of Cromwellianism had been long deplored and forgotten, and when to oppose the King seemed not so very different from opposing Heaven itself.

Unrest had been growing. The British officers, in Boston, were told that the men of New England were

## THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA

about to rise and that warlike supplies had been gathered at Concord. So eight hundred soldiers were sent out, under Lieutenant-Colonel Smith and Major Pitcairn, to destroy the supplies there and to capture, if possible, John Hancock and Samuel Adams, who were reported to be in hiding at Lexington.

It was on the night of the 18th that Paul Revere was sent out to warn the countryside. He reached little Lexington in the darkness, and the minutemen of the village were aroused and toward daybreak they gathered on the triangular village green. The green was then, as it is now, a place of quiet beauty, of charm, edged with huge elms and ash trees and faced by homes of dignity. The grass grows very, very green, as is curiously usual with the grass on battlefields.

Lexington is still a village of such charm as befits a great national happening, in spite of the coming in, with the passage of years, of somewhat of the unpicturesque. There are cedars set pictorially on the stony slopes; there are oaks by the roadside; there are grounds of sweet spaciousness and elms in lovely vistas. And the village, although it has been a point of pilgrimage for a hundred and fifty years, is still entirely without tourist characteristics. A beautiful white-pillared meeting-house looks out over the green, but the meeting-house which stood at the very point of the green, in 1775, has vanished. A few of the old houses still remain, such as the fine square Harrington homestead, facing the green with its prim little low-setting eaves. An old monument stands on a little mound on the green, with the bodies of the men

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

slain on that great day buried around it, and on this monument and on tablets throughout the village are descriptions that must thrill the heart of every American, particularly impressive being the simple marking of the line where a few men made the first actual stand against England.

It was a lovely April morning; from two o'clock the minutemen had been ready; and as the early dawn was beginning to appear they gathered once more, for news had come that the British were actually at hand. It was now about half-past four.

In all some fifty or sixty Americans formed, in two narrow parallel rows. The British came in sight, their arms glinting and their red coats glowing in the soft spring light. Catching sight of the Americans, they broke into double-quick, but, "Stand your ground; don't fire unless fired upon; but if they want to have a war let it begin right here," said Captain John Parker; and the bravely solemn words are engraved for all time upon a boulder that has been placed where he stood. Major Pitcairn rode forward and sternly ordered the minutemen to disperse; but they stood firm, and swiftly there came a volley against them and a number fell. Several were killed; others were wounded. There were a few scattering shots in reply. The Americans dispersed. And the British hastily resumed their march toward Concord. That was all—all, except that from Lexington came freedom.

Never was there greater capriciousness of happening than in the different fates of two Jonathan Harringtons who stood with the line at Lexington: for one

## THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA

Jonathan Harrington, mortally wounded, dragged himself to the door of his own house, fronting the green, and died at the feet of his young wife, whereas the other Jonathan Harrington lived longest of any of the company, not dying until seventy-nine years afterwards, and at the great age of ninety-eight.

The road from Lexington to Concord, along which the British continued and back over which they were to hurry in disastrous retreat, is still a sweet and a charming road, a road of wildness, with rarely a house to be seen in the six miles of its length, and thereby a road that gives a deep impression of its lovely loneliness in early days.

Bordered for a short distance by trees that arch over the entire width of road—thus it begins. It climbs a rolling sweep, lush with greenery, and then, passing beyond a little group of modern houses, becomes a narrow lane with widely sweeping views. It goes twistingly on, bordered by ancient stone walls. Continuously there is loneliness. Purple hills billow into the distances. The road goes up and down over little sloping rises; it is rarely straight, but goes constantly bending. There are pine trees, there are ponds and pools, there are thick masses of piney woodland, there are groves of little white birches, there are fall asters and the scarlet sumac. There is much of rock and ruggedness, and, rounding a rocky bluff, the road bends with the bending hill away, and you come to one of the spots where the British, retreating, tried in vain to rally; and here all is as wild as on that April day of so long ago, and perhaps even wilder;



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

there were likely enough a few more houses in this region then than there are now; indeed, a glow of red in a lonely spot on the farther side of a bleak swamp turns out to be the fruit of an ancient orchard, where no longer is there either house or barn. Always there is a foreground of forest or the distant sweep of tree-covered hills; it is astonishing, the continued loneliness of effect, and this but a few miles out from Boston.

And thus, past lines of birch that overhang the road, and gracious elms that dot the open glades, and walls of stone that fence the rocky fields, we go on into sweet and charming Concord—a place that, once known to the full of its attractiveness, remains a wistful memory.

A trolley leads from Boston to Lexington, following for much of the distance the route taken by the British, but from Lexington to Concord it follows another road, leaving this part untouched and unspoiled.

Concord is felicitously named, for it has an atmosphere of peace; but it was far from being a place of concord with the British! When the British reached Concord they were separated into several parties, which searched houses and destroyed gun-carriages and powder, and at the old Wright Tavern, still standing, Pitcairn stirred his brandy and vaingloriously declared that thus should the blood of the patriots be stirred. And it was stirred!—but not precisely as he meant it.

A party of perhaps a hundred went through the village to the bridge over the Concord River, following what was then a public road, though afterwards the

## THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA

line of road was changed, leaving this a cut-off at the bridge, and it is now a quiet spot beside the water, among the trees, away from traffic.

The Americans, outnumbered by the main body of the British, had retreated to this bridge, and with the passing of the hours hundreds and hundreds more came hurrying in.

The Continentals stood at one side of the "rude bridge that arched the flood"—how perfectly Emerson phrased the entire scene, in the first stanza of his Concord lines! The bridge that literally arched the river long since disappeared, but the new structure reproduces it in shape and size; and the stream that now moves on with such full gentleness moved on with sweet, full gentleness on that long-ago April day.

The Americans were under the command, in a sort of informal way, of Captain Buttrick; they had not heard of what had occurred at Lexington; they felt that the solemn responsibility lay upon them of war or peace.

The British came to the other side of the bridge. Captain Laurie was in command. And what thoughts the name of a Laurie evokes! For the home of Annie Laurie actually exists in Maxwellton in Scotland, and what is deemed her portrait is there shown, and portraits of several military Lauries are upon the walls. It would be curious indeed if this Laurie at Concord was a kinsman of the beloved Annie.

The British halted; there was angry parley; then the British fired and two Americans fell dead and several were wounded; instantly the Americans fired and two Englishmen were killed and nine were wounded.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

There was no thought of retreat on the part of the Americans. Captain Laurie drew off his force and retreated toward the main body of the British at the center of the village. The Americans cut across the hills to intercept all of them at Merriam's Corners. And it is a curious fact that another party of a hundred or so of British, returning over this very bridge from a search for munitions, a little after the conflict there, saw no combatants, alive, of either side.

The British knew now that the entire countryside was roused, and they decided upon a retreat. They started doggedly back to Lexington, fired at by sharpshooters hidden behind barns and houses and stone walls, but before they reached Lexington the retreat became a frantic rout and they were in direst straits.

At Lexington there was a brief respite, for at this point they were met by a reënforcement of a thousand men who had been hurried out from Boston, under Earl Percy, at the first news of real trouble.

Percy did all that bravery and ability could do. He placed field cannon so as to sweep the road and ridge and hold the Americans briefly in check. He had quite a number of the wounded men treated. He made his headquarters at the Monroe Tavern, a square-fronted old building, still existent, on the main road; and the farthest point of his advance has in recent years been marked by a stone cannon set at the roadside.

Earl Percy, Duke of Northumberland as he was to become, seems to stand in a special degree for the régime of the aristocracy that the Revolution overthrew. And personally he won the reputation of being a most

## THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA

brave and likable man. I remember a portrait of him, in the office of the president of Harvard, and it shows him with full eyes, arched brows, and extremely long Roman nose, and a pleasant expression, dressed in a uniform with facings and epaulets and with lace at the breast and at the cuffs. He was idolized by his soldiers, for he was always doing some thoughtful kindness, such as sending home to England, at his own expense, the widows of those of his regiment who were killed at Lexington and Bunker Hill. His picturesque presence seemed to mark the futility of the greatest of the English nobility in the face of our Revolution.

The retreat of Percy and Smith and Pitcairn from Lexington to Boston was galling and disastrous. Tablets along the roadside tell much of the tale, but they do not tell of the burning of houses by the British soldiers and they tell little of their killing of unarmed men; the British were maddened by the incessant shooting from right and left, and got quite beyond the control of their harassed officers. A party of soldiers set upon an old farmer of over eighty, after he had slain two of them, and they clubbed and shot and stabbed him into unconsciousness. Besides general bruises he had seventeen bayonet wounds! But, octogenarian of enviable stamina that he was, he recovered and lived to nearly the century point!

It was a sultry day, a day of early and intense spring heat, which made the carrying of gun and accouterments for twenty miles of deadly retreat after twenty miles of night advance, a heavy task.

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

It was almost eight o'clock when the soldiers came to the edge of Boston and found safety under the guns of their battleships in the harbor. Not till then did the pursuit cease. On that day the British loss was almost three hundred men, to less than a hundred of the Americans; the British lost more in this defeat by farmers than they had lost to capture Quebec!

Here at Concord the scene may still be visualized. Here is the famous road, leading into the heart of the village, with the low ridge bordering it at one side and level meadows sweeping off at the other; here are bullet-marked houses standing that witnessed the gathering and the flight. Here is a beautiful old church, not indeed the one that stood here in 1775, but one heedfully following that design and giving completion to the general effect, with its beauty of detail and proportion. And at the bridge, the brimming river calmly flows, and close beside the battlefield still stands the sweet Old Manse, weather-worn, dun-colored, almost gloomy, shaded by great pines and fronted by an avenue of ancient ash trees; and at the side of the house is the old road to the bridge, lined by a mighty double line of gloomy firs, and in their shade is the grave of the first two of the British to be killed, who, as the inscription has it, came three thousand miles to die.

The minister's wife watched the skirmish from the Old Manse, from the window of a room afterwards to be the study, in turn, of Ralph Waldo Emerson and Nathaniel Hawthorne. For this ancient Manse has associations even better known than those that connect



## THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA

it with the battle. In fact, when Concord is mentioned, it is probable that more people think of its literary associations than of its connection with our warlike history. And probably no house was ever given a more charming description than was given by Hawthorne to this romantic Old Manse, to which he and his wife came to make the first home of their married life. But both Emerson and Hawthorne moved, in turn, to other homes in the village.

The house which was the home of Emerson for the best part of his lifetime, a square-front building of much dignity, is but a few minutes' walk from the center of the village, on the road along which the British advanced and retreated. Emerson was dearly loved by the entire village; he seems to have been the beneficent deity of the place, though ever far from being a rich man. When, returning from a visit to Europe, he found that the townsfolk had repaired his house, which had been injured by fire, and that they had gathered to give him a loving welcome home, he was too much overcome to speak, and could only bow his head and move silently toward his door, only to force himself to turn, for a moment, to show his heartfelt appreciation, and to say that he was sure this was not a tribute to him, an old man, returning home, but to the "common blood of us all, one family, in Concord." The best of the world were his friends, in person or by correspondence, but he none the less loved to meet his humble neighbors, and to take his part in town-meetings—and he even joined the fire company! He had come to Concord after forever giving up the

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

ministry; he had driven over, in a chaise, from Plymouth, with his bride—the drive being his wedding journey—and he had lovingly made his home in the lovely town.

The house is owned by descendants of Emerson, and his library is maintained just as he quitted it; there is the same reddish carpet with its great roses, there are the same chairs, the same Boston rocker, the same table, the same row of book-shelves, ceiling-high and crowded with mellow books; and every evening his lamp is lighted just as if he were expected to come in.

Emerson and Hawthorne liked and respected each other, but there was little personal communion between them, for Hawthorne was everything that Emerson was not, and Emerson was everything that Hawthorne was not. The solemn Hawthorne, easily bored, would never put himself out to interest or be interested by those whose companionship he did not enjoy, and he kept from intercourse with the townsfolk whom Emerson treated in such neighborly fashion. Naturally Hawthorne often grew as tired of himself as of others. Once, when his wife went away on an absence of some days, he determined, so he wrote in his journal, to speak not a word to any human being during the entire time of her absence; only to find Thoreau come to his door, whereupon he grudgingly admits him, and reluctantly confesses to his journal that to hear Thoreau talk is like hearing the wind among the boughs of a forest tree.

Thoreau, that other man of Concord, must have been intensely interesting; that both Emerson and Haw-

## THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA

thorne admired him would alone be tribute sufficient; he was manly, he was a marvelous observer of trees and plants and animals; he would sit so silently, to watch some forest animal, that, as Emerson records, the animal would itself go toward him, in fearless curiosity, to watch the watcher!

It was here, in Concord, that the peripatetic Alcotts found their home; more even than in Boston. They had three successive homes in Concord, and that which is particularly associated with their life, the house in which Louisa M. Alcott wrote her "Little Women," has remained practically unchanged since their time. It stands charmingly at the foot of the wooded ridge, not far from the Emerson house, but on the opposite side of the road. Beside it is the little building once famous as the School of Philosophy; and surely there was never any other American place where such an undertaking could have seriously and successfully been carried on! Bronson Alcott, forgotten as he is, was the kind of man of whom Emerson could say, in all seriousness, that he had the finest mind since Plato; and before taking this statement with a critical smile, perhaps we ought to reflect that few ever knew as much of both Plato and Alcott as did Emerson!

The home of the later years of Hawthorne—Hawthorne, the novelist's ancestors spelled it, but he changed it by adding the "w"—is next to the "Little Women" home of the Alcotts—whose name, by the way, was changed by the philosopher from Alcox. The house, which Hawthorne, on acquiring it, pleasantly named the "Wayside," had itself been one of

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

the earlier homes of the Alcotts, and such unphilosophical things were done to it as quite destroyed its pre-Revolutionary aspect. It was never among the finest of the old-time homes; the general type, hereabouts, largely from the absence of dormer windows, was not nearly so attractive as in much of old New England. Hawthorne made further alterations to please his own taste, and developed the place into a pleasing home, quiet and attractive. It is hemmed in by solemn evergreens, and from its place at the foot of the ridge looks out across the sweeping meadows.

On the low hills behind the center of the village is Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, and here lie buried Louisa May Alcott and her father, and the nature lover Thoreau, and Ralph Waldo Emerson and Nathaniel Hawthorne; "there in seclusion and remote from men, the wizard hand lies cold."

At the very center of the village, on the ridge-side, stands a more ancient graveyard, where lie the early pioneers; and among the ancient headstones, flaking and blackening with time, I noticed one that was particularly black and flaked: with difficulty the inscription was deciphered, and it is to the effect that the stone was designed by its durability to perpetuate the memory, and by its color—its color!—to "signify the moral character," of a certain Abigail Dudley, on whom Time has played so ungallant a jest.

One of the very oldest houses of Concord is maintained as a local museum, and within it are fascinating relics of the past: old china, old furniture—notably some Jacobean chairs and a court cupboard, dear to

## THE MOST IMPORTANT ROAD IN AMERICA

any collector's heart—with things remindful of the writers of Concord; and also there are memorials of the great day at Concord, the day of the fight at the bridge—and that is something that, with its lessons, should never be overlooked or belittled or forgotten. As one of the wisest of American humorists long ago paraphrasingly said—and every really great humorist has wisdom as the basis of his humor—"In the brite Lexington of youth thar aint no sich word as fale."

It is odd, that a little place like Concord should have won such a mingled reputation for loveliness, fearlessness and literature. I remember meeting a scholarly Englishman, on a St. Lawrence steamer, who had landed at Quebec, as he told me, in order to see Canada first, but who would soon cross the boundary. "Most of all," he said, "I wish to see Concord, for it is classic ground." And that is it. Concord is classic ground.





## CHAPTER XXIII

### PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN



CLOSE behind Plymouth, close beside this home of the Pilgrims, close to this spot where three hundred years ago began the campaign against the wilderness, there is still an immense tract of wild and lonely woodland, there are miles and miles of wilderness almost unbroken except by roads; there are seemingly endless stretches of oak trees intermingled with lovely pines and sentineled by cedars, and underneath is a tangle of huckleberries and sweet fern and bracken, with frequently the white sand gleaming through the darker soil that has tried to accumulate. In the very heart of this wilderness one may come with almost startling unexpectedness upon some old house aflame with trumpet-vine or white with flowering masses of paniculata, but the few homes are widely isolated. The region is even now wild enough for one to imagine the presence of the prowling bear and the prowling Indian of early days; and, in fact and without imagination, the deer and the fox are frequently

## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

to be met. "Ye whole countrie, full of woodes & thickets, presented a wilde & savage heiw," as Bradford himself, leader among the Pilgrims, wrote. Much of Massachusetts has reverted to wilderness; immense tracts that once were a succession of farms have gone back to scrub woodland; but nowhere is it more noticeable than here.

The ancient town of Plymouth still has much of an old-fashioned aspect in spite of the inroad of modern buildings; it is still a comely American town, sitting decorously beside the sea, with its older portion close to the water-front, where a few old houses still stand, in shingle-sided irregularity, beneath the low-rounding rise where the first burials were made in graves that were left unmarked from fear of the Indians creeping in and counting the deaths; away from this there sweeps a little stretch where the greater part of the town was built and where still is much of an aspect of staid dignity; and behind all this is the watch-hill that became the principal graveyard of the settlement.

Little fishing boats lie at their moorings, and fishermen in yellow oil-skins lean, gregariously gossiping, against the buildings beside the piers, and nets are stretched out to dry, and sea-gulls go curving and dipping and flying, and across the water are barrier spits of sand, greened with grass, and along the shore are scattered a few attractive homes, with greenery close about them, and far out at the left of the bay and far out at the right, are jutting promontories, tree-clad.

But it is not a stern and rock-bound coast; it is a sandy coast; and it is seldom that the breaking waves

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

dash high in this sheltered nook; and yet they were inspired lines that Felicia Hemans wrote, for they represented the bravery and the loneliness of it all, the unbreakable, undaunted spirit that moved those early Pilgrims; and the lines ought never to be forgotten by Americans:

“Not as the flying come,  
In silence and in fear—  
They shook the depths of the desert’s gloom  
With their hymns of lofty cheer.”

It is curious that this British woman so felt and expressed the spirit of the band of exiles who moored their bark on this wild New England shore; and it is curious that she, who could so perfectly express the feeling of early America, has better than any other poet expressed the sense of the beauty and finish of England, in her lines beginning “The stately homes of England, how beautiful they stand!”

On this sandy shore it must have been difficult for the Pilgrims to find a boulder big enough to land upon, but, as if recognizing that posterity would really need a Plymouth Rock, they managed to find one, and here it is, carefully preserved, at the waterside, after having wandered about the town, from one stopping-place to another, in the course of the centuries, and even having suffered in its travels a fracture which was carefully repaired. It now has the protection of a stone canopy and a gated iron fence, but the gates are usually kept open, for there is such a general and profound respect for this stone that no one thinks of

## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

treating it carelessly, and I have seen even little children who have run under the canopy in a sudden shower rub their hands gently over the stone as if in reverence. It has not been chipped or spoiled, as stone monuments open to the opportunities of vandalism are so likely to be. Round about the memorial is a little grassy spot that has been made charming with roses and barberries.

The low rise that was originally the burial-hill is still surprisingly steep, for it has never been graded away; a little back from it stand a hotel and some homes, but at the very edge a little landslide a few years ago uncovered some of the bones of the very earliest settlers. Away from this low rise there runs the little stream beside which the Pilgrim leaders first met Massasoit, and the garden plots that lie behind the backs of the houses mark the original "meersteads" or homestead limits of the original allotment.

Old records have been kept, and among them is one narrating how, seven years after the landing, the Pilgrims divided by lot, with meticulous particularity, the few cattle and goats into thirteen portions each: "the Greate Black cow came in the Ann" as it is set down; "the red Cow and the Heyfers," so it is written, with freedom of spelling and capitalization, "came in the Jacob"; and there are various details in regard to "the greate white backt cow" and the other stock.

Plymouth possesses a great deal of attractiveness, and indeed real beauty. The deep blue of the water, edged by the promontoried greenery of trees, makes a

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

charming frontage, and within the town itself there are many huge trees, some of them carefully marked with records of their planting; there are great elms, and there are lindens of giant size. In any direction one may see masses of dahlias, or the flowering honeysuckle, and there are ancient gardens charmingly inclosed within the greenery of ancient box.

There are houses of red brick and there are houses of white-painted frame; there are houses with gambrel roofs and great old chimneys and pillared porticoes. There is still many a dignified old front, broad and generous with doorway of loveliness; there are still some of the old-time fan-windows over the entrances; there are reeded pilasters; there is still much of the bulgy old-time window-glass.

On the way up the low slope from the water is an interesting looking old gambrel-roofed house with wooden front and brick ends, and somehow it pleased me to hear a little girl who was sitting on the steps called "Barbara" by her father, for the name seemed to fit the old-time house as did also the ancient looking pussy-cat sitting there in dignified sedateness. And a tablet upon this old house shows that it stands on the spot where an even more interesting house once stood for it was "erected by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to mark the site of the first house built by the Pilgrims. In that house on the 27th of February, 1621, the right of popular suffrage was exercised and Miles Standish was chosen captain by a majority vote."

Just up the slope and but a short distance from the



## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

Rock, stands an old mansion of interest as a survival of early architecture, although of a time much more recent than that of the Pilgrims; it is a house of unusually noble beauty and spaciousness and about it is a garden of flowered charm.

The modern and unattractive that have come into the town may easily be disregarded by those who desire to see old Plymouth. Much of the old, much that has made the atmosphere of the past and which rouses memories of the brave old times, is still here.

A streak of meticulousness must have become implanted by the early itemizing of the thirteen shares of cattle, for in what other town would one find a notice to motorists warning them of a dangerous corner fifty-eight feet away! And as to other public notices—well, stop to gaze at some interesting-looking tablet and you will probably find it a warning that there will be a fine of twenty dollars if you spit on the sidewalk.

The First Church in Plymouth—although it is really the fifth first church—is tableted as a “meeting house,” although in reality it is a solid stone building, early Norman in design. It faces the little town square, where three veteran elms shade the yellow sand that covers the open space. Diagonally across from this structure, and also looking out upon the little square, is a much older church, a highly attractive building in white painted wood, with white pillars, and attractive pillared tower. This church is called the Church of the Pilgrimage.

Burial Hill, the height that rises from these two

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

churches, is dotted thick with gravestones, and among them are noted the boundary spots of the early fortifications. This hill was beacon hill and fort hill and burial hill in one, as if to show very materially that life and death depended upon watchfulness and fighting. On the highest part is a stone that marks the grave of doughty old Bradford, the several times governor. Looking down upon the town from this hill-top one sees a broad massing of the greenery of trees, with here and there the white or red of the houses peeping through and with three lovely belfries rising in variant charm, one being covered with copper, another being all white, and the third showing a top of gold.

Standing on top of this hill the memory came to me of the top of that hill on Hope Bay, in Rhode Island, where King Philip made his last stand against the white man; and I thought of it not only because the two hills are in a general way alike in looking over an expanse of land and water along a generally level coast line, but because the head of King Philip, that noble Indian who had been given his name by the white men from King Philip of Macedon, was brought here to Plymouth and placed publicly on a spike, where it remained a memento of ignoble triumph for many years. Webster, in an oration at Plymouth, said, "like the dove from the Ark, the *Mayflower* put forth only to find rest"; but the people who came in the *Mayflower* were certainly not all doves. The barrel of the very gun that belonged to King Philip has been preserved, not as a matter of shame but of

## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

pride, and it is shown in the museum of Plymouth in Pilgrim Hall.

It is pleasant to notice on the stones above the graves the frequency of the name of Priscilla, and the dates show that it was a common name, even before the time when Longfellow made it so famous, thus showing that from early days the history of this sweet young Pilgrim girl fascinated the general imagination; or, as Longfellow himself would have expressed it, that the region was "full of the name and the fame of the Puritan maiden Priscilla."

Priscilla was a very real girl, and her last name was Mullines; not the "Mullins" into which the name has been rather commonized. But the name was spelled with some variety even by Governor Bradford, who mentioned it three times in his history and each time differently, the most important entry being that "Mr. Molines, and his wife, his sone, and his servant, dyed the first winter. Only his dougter Priscila survied, and married with John Alden, who are both living, and have 11. children. And their eldest daughter is married, & hath five children."

Bradford himself did not stand much for romance, and it is from other sources that there comes the story of the courtship of John Alden. It seems, so the old story has it, that Alden first presented the proposal of Standish, not to Priscilla, but to Priscilla's father, who promptly called Priscilla into the conference, with the result that she made the forever-to-be-remembered query of the bashful John as to speaking for himself. What her father said or thought is not

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

on record, but it was very shortly after the proposal that John and Priscilla were married; and the tradition is, not as Longfellow gives it, that Standish and Alden again became friends, but that Alden was never forgiven by Standish. John Alden's daughter Sarah, however, did afterwards marry Standish's son Alexander.

Courtships and marriages went very quickly in those early days, when children were a decided asset to any family in aiding to clear the wilderness, and when loneliness was a great disadvantage. As an example, the wife of Winslow died in March of 1621, the husband of Susanna White died in February of the same year, and in May of that year the short-time widower Winslow and the short-time widow White married. Miles Standish, in his courtship of Priscilla, was similarly hasty; for his wife, whom he had married in England, died late in January, 1621, and as Alden and Priscilla were married early in that year it may be seen how swift was the courtship of Standish, and also that Alden was not at all slow in following up his own desires. After this refusal Standish waited three years before he married for the second time, but it is possible that some other woman refused him meanwhile.

There is a collection at Plymouth, in Pilgrim Hall, which is rich in mementoes of the very early days. There is the great circular gate-legged table, almost six feet across, rigid and strong and plain and underbraced, which was the council table when Winslow was governor. There is the very chair of the first

## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

governor, John Carver, who died in the first winter, a plain, massive turned chair which seems as severe as the popular idea of the most severe belongings. There is the veritable sword of Miles Standish, a Damascus blade. There is a dear little wicker cradle, a Dutch cradle, in shape like a basket with a hood to keep off the draft, carried with the *Mayflower* for little Peregrine White, named from the peregrinations of his parents, and the first white child born on the soil of New England. Little Oceanus Hopkins might have taken away the title of precedence from Peregrine had Oceanus not been born, as his name implies, before the *Mayflower* reached the promised land. Many other things, little and big, are preserved. There are early spoons and early needle work. There is some superb ecclesiastical silver designed for the early churches and preserved with record of where it was made.

Standing anywhere along the shore at Plymouth, or on the hill, one cannot but notice a monument that rises, lofty and striking, far out beyond the leftward stretch of the bay; and this is the monument to Miles Standish. Although he was not a Puritan, and not really a Pilgrim, for he was a soldier of fortune, who had been fighting for the Dutch against the Spanish and then as a soldier of Queen Elizabeth, a Dalgetty, who was out of employment as a fighter when the Pilgrims sailed and was engaged as an excellent man to meet the savages, he has been given a far more prominent monument than has any other of those early men; and so nobly did he develop, at Plymouth,



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

in bravery, in self-sacrifice, in the finest qualities of manhood that he well deserves prominent remembrance. The old chronicle has it Captain Standish and Elder Brewster, more than any others, "to their great comendations be it spoken, spared no pains night nor day, but with abundance of toyle and hazard of their own strength helped others in sickness and death, a rare example worthy to be remembered"; and in addition Standish was a man of absolute bravery.

The monument is reached by a roundabout way, of several miles, from Plymouth. The figure of Standish tops the structure; and by some unexplainable freak he is made to face away from the town that honored him and for which he did so much. The monument is on the summit of a considerable hill and there is in view a long, long line of shore; and looking toward the sea one may see, as I have seen, the water dotted with the mackerel fleet, setting homeward; and a thin gray vagueness on the horizon marks the distant line of Cape Cod. Looking landward, one sees endless miles of bluish pine woods through which the white spire of a meeting house rises with effective unexpectedness, and looking across the bay toward Plymouth there is a wonderful effect as if the city is still a place crowded against the waterside at the edge of a vast wilderness.

A rather small old house, a story and a half high, sleeping under the shelter of this hill, a house with a sort of distinction in spite of its smallness, and

## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

with a great lilac bush at its front, a house that must always have been rather solitary, is the house in which some have believed that Standish lived for the last years of his life; but in reality it would seem that his own house, long vanished, stood close beside where this house stands and that this was put up by an immediate descendant.

That Standish was a short man, sinewy and robust, and that his little library actually contained, just as the poet has described it, the Commentaries of Cæsar, are among the rather slender facts known in regard to his personality, but an inventory of the property left by him at his death itemizes that in his possession, among other things, were 4 bedsteads and 1 settle bed, 5 feather beds with blankets and sheets, 1 tablecloth and 4 napkins, 4 iron pots, 3 brass kettles and one dozen wooden plates—with no plates of any better material mentioned. There were muskets and sword; and, as if in defiance of the spinning-wheel of Priscilla which, after all, was more a matter of concern to Alden than to him, there were two spinning-wheels. Horses and cattle must have increased in the colony since the earliest days for he left at his death 2 mares, 2 colts and 1 young horse, 4 oxen, 6 cows, 3 heifers, 1 calf, 8 sheep, 2 rams, 1 wether and 14 swine.

At quite a distance, naturally, from this spot, is where John Alden and Priscilla lived, but, like this, within the limits of Duxbury. It is a pleasant drive across country, from one place to the other, through

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

a region of blue inlets setting in from the blue, blue sea, with much of pine woods, and of the little bushes that bear beach plums.

The house built here by John Alden has disappeared, but the present building stands on its site and, it is believed, was built by a grandson. But it looks old enough to have been built toward the end of John Alden's long life, and it is possible, though not probable, that he actually lived in it. Often, it is impossible to fix the precise date of construction of an ancient house, as the only definite records are likely to be of land alone and not the buildings.

This Alden house stands on the top of a low mound; it is shingled-sided; and the present occupant confided to me that if he did not keep a close eye on visitors every silvery old shingle would soon be stripped off as a souvenir! The entire front of the house is massed in a luxurious greenery of grapevines, entwined with scarlet dotted trumpet-vines; a peach tree is espaliered on the side and a great trumpet-vine has clambered upon the roof; and nearby is a field that, when I saw it, was a great yellow splendor of golden-rod, bordered empurplingly with asters.

How strange it must all have seemed to Alden! He never intended to be a Pilgrim. He was a cooper, hired at Southampton when the *Mayflower* touched there, and it was expected that he would return in the ship from America. But he was "a hopfull young man," and the leaders quietly hoped that he would remain—and Priscilla did the rest. It is so pleasant to think of the poetic wedding journey with the bride

## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

mounted on the white bull, that it is needlessly iconoclastic to point out that the very first cattle, three heifers and a bull, did not reach Plymouth until 1624.

It is sometimes forgotten that the first landing of the Pilgrims in the New World was not made at Plymouth but at the inside of the tip of Cape Cod; where, not long after their visit, the settlement of Provincetown was made.

Cape Cod, at the time of their visit, was a desolate region, but had earlier been visited by others. First, the Norsemen; afterwards, Bartholomew Gosnold, who gave the cape its fishy name; even the picturesque Champlain made a brief stop here, as did the equally picturesque Captain John Smith, who described the fields of corn and "salvage gardens." So many people were here before the Pilgrims as to give almost an effect of crowded life! But it was lonely enough when the Pilgrims actually came, though they did finally see some Indians, who, although they ran off, did so, "whistling to their dogge"!

Sand is the principal product of Provincetown. The whole Cape is shifting sand, that changes with every wind, and that makes hills into valleys and valleys into hills, and that threatens to destroy the little town itself.

Many have been the wrecks on Cape Cod; and most interesting was that of the *Somerset*, on the outer edge of the narrow cape. This was the big man-of-war, of from forty to sixty cannon and a crew of almost five hundred men, under whose lee, when it

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

was in Boston harbor, Paul Revere was rowed when starting with the message to Lexington. It aided in the bombardment of the Americans on the day of Bunker Hill, and afterwards won a cruel reputation for its seizures of American shipping. In a great storm in 1778 it was driven ashore here, and the tradition of the Cape has it that, most of the men being absent on military duty, the women took an active share in holding captive the men from the wreck and in getting the guns to land to save them for the use of the American army. The wreck was completely dismantled; gradually it was covered with sand and the very place was forgotten. Years afterwards, a storm uncovered it, and then the sands covered it again, and many years later it was again uncovered and fully identified by details of its structure from official records furnished by the Admiralty in London. Before the sands covered it again I saw it myself, with its grim and blackened vertebræ; and it was fascinating to find such a memento of the Revolution lying on this lonely outward shore, so near little Provincetown.

Growing wild in hollows among the dunes, with scrub pines and oaks, is the marvelously fragrant bayberry from which the early settlers made their candles and from which a later generation made bay rum. And in these hollows wild roses grow in luxuriousness, and innumerable red beach-plums.

Provincetown is distinctly a sailor's town; there are sailors here who have been all over the world; but it will be noticed that "barges" are not boats but



## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

wagons! A figurehead from some old ship leans forward from a post; fish-shaped weather-vanes turn with the varying winds; you naturally see a seamen's bank; a profusion of binoculars pervades the place; you may even catch sight of the backbone of a whale in a captain's yard; wreckage is stacked for fire-wood; and in some of the old pilastered or porticoed houses there are preserved the original logs of whaling trips, showing whales, pictured in ink that long since yellowed, to mark the days of fortunate catches.

Every sailor seems to have the title of captain; most, in fact, have a right to the title, for each has been in charge of at least a fishing-boat; and these captains are men of individual interest. One is a gatherer of ambergris (romantic name!), and he also sells watch-makers' oil, which he poetically procures from porpoise heads. Another of the captains, a gentle soul, is a story-teller who, unfortunately, has so out-told himself that the same narratives are given over and over. "Have I ever told this before?" I heard him interrupt himself to ask one day; and when the goaded interlocutor, another captain, replied that he had, the first captain responded, gently tolerant, "Oh, well, I'll tell it again then." Another captain, confiding to me that he had been married fifty-five years, gravely added, as he pointed to his old dog lying beside him, "And that is all I've got left to show for it." Another told of a life-time sea-friend who had recently died at the age of ninety-two. "Did he leave any family?" "No," said the captain. "His father and mother were both dead." When, speaking

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

with another, I commented on the roses growing in profuse loveliness in the gardens of the town, in spite of the difficulties of sand, he replied, from some pessimistic association of ideas: "Yes, but if there is ever a year when the rose-bugs don't get after the roses the dogfish are sure to get after the mackerel." But optimism is the prevailing note, as with a captain, an ancient, earnest citizen, who exclaimed to me: "Why, the man who would complain of this Cape Cod climate would complain if he were going to be hung!" Another still tells the story of a sea-serpent that he saw many years ago; and I was told that when his townsmen ridiculed him and frankly told him, from knowledge of his idiosyncrasies, that he must have been drinking, he went before a notary and made affidavit that "I was not drinking on the day I saw the sea-serpent"—and he still fails to see why everybody laughs. Another, speaking of the general truthfulness of the place, deemed it measurably referable to ancient strictness of law, giving as an example that in the good old formative days "a captain was fined five dollars for lying about a whale."

The Portuguese, always locally referred to as "Portygees," have come in so freely from the Azores and the Cape de Verde Islands, that they give a markedly alien touch, with their distinctive language, religion, dress and costumes. The town is permeated by them. They are active rivals, on the sea, of the descendants of the early Americans, and I remember that a sailing race, open to all, was won by a boat whose captain and crew were all Portuguese; but none the less did

## PLYMOUTH AND PROVINCETOWN

Provincetown royally welcome the victors, and deck its streets with brooms and buckets. A still further alien touch is given by a lofty monument, set up a few years ago as a memorial to the landing here of the Pilgrims, and which, from some odd reason, is of distinctly Italian style.

A town-crier still busies himself with the crier's ancient duties, and the townsfolk claim that the custom has kept on undisturbed from early times.

The talk and interests of Provincetown are of cod and mackerel and haddock, and when a boat comes in with a catch the event is eagerly discussed along the entire three miles of far-flung water front. The town is principally one long and sinuous and attenuated street, but there are also little lanes twisting away from it. A few old-time houses still remain with silver-gray shingles on their roofs and sides. Everywhere is an aspect of scrupulous neatness, as if on shipboard, and the houses in general have a snug-gled and tucked-in look as if triced down for a storm. Many are shaded by big trees; and it is curious that there are so many great elms and enormous swamp-willows in spite of the discouraging environment.

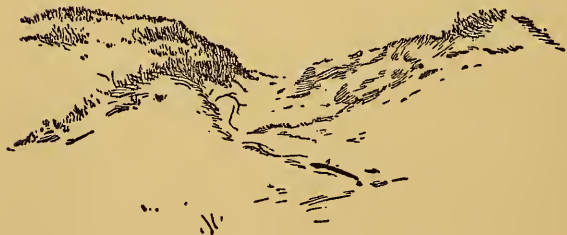
When the tide sweeps out, great flats of green and yellow and gray stretch off in front of the town, and amphibious horses, half submerged, draw far out, in the track of the receding tides, little carts, likewise half-submerged, into which to unload such fishing-boats as return at a time when they cannot reach the piers.

But sand is the prevailing feature. Surely, round

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

about Provincetown is where the Walrus and the Carpenter walked together. You remember the lines?

“The sea was wet as wet could be,  
The sands were dry as dry.  
You could not see a cloud, because  
No cloud was in the sky:  
The Walrus and the Carpenter  
Were walking close at hand;  
They wept like anything to see  
Such quantities of sand:  
‘If this were only cleared away,’  
They said, ‘it would be grand!’ ”



## CHAPTER XXIV

“THE NIGHT SHALL BE FILLED WITH MUSIC”



“**I** SAIL from Liverpool on Saturday for Boston,” writes Thackeray to “My dearest old friend,” Edward Fitzgerald, and he says he is “very grave and solemn,” and he writes with gravity and solemnity of what may happen to his wife and daughters if anything should happen to him!

It seems odd that a journey to Boston, whether by an American or an Englishman, should ever have aroused such tragic forebodings. Equally curious is the description, by William Dean Howells, of his own first visit there, for he went, as he set it down, “as the passionate pilgrim from the West approached his Holy Land in Boston.” And Boston still likes people to come in this spirit!

One is tempted to wonder if Boston does not spend too much time looking at her intellectual features in the mirror; after all, she is pretty old for that—she is almost at her three hundredth birthday. But, if it should really be that the city displays a little too much self-consciousness, a little too much readiness to resent anything that even slightly savors of criticism,



## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

there is much of gratification in being not only a city of famous places and famous deeds but at the same time one of character and of individuality. Little things may mark individuality, quite as well as great or even better; and it has always interested me that Boston once had an ordinance forbidding any person to keep a dog over ten inches in height, and that even now rump-steak is gladly paid for by most Bostonians as the most expensive of cuts! In all seriousness, the city has a very real individuality. And with a city of individuality almost anything can be overlooked.

And there is so much of the picturesque in Boston; the old houses and their old environment, the sea-gulls on a sunny winter's day circling and crying over Beacon Hill; the fine old tales and traditions. The very "twilight that surrounds the border-land of old romance" is in Boston.

And one does not need to enumerate the list of statesmen and writers who have aided to make Boston glorious and who have shone in the glory that they helped to create. And yet, the attitude of Boston toward Hawthorne and Poe, perhaps the two most distinctive geniuses of American literature, ought also to be remembered.

Boston did not recognize Hawthorne when he was struggling for literary foothold, even though for a time he lived here. And Poe, though few Bostonians know it and none boasts of it, was Boston-born! Poe was the child of a pair of poor traveling actors; it would seem, though there is no precise certainty, that

## “THE NIGHT FILLED WITH MUSIC”

the house where he was born was in the vicinity of where afterwards was built the Hollis Street Theater. Poe's associations with Boston were not happy; he was here later in his life, as a young man, poor and disappointed, and enlisted here under an assumed name, as a private soldier. He called Boston “Frogpondium,” meaning the same as the late Charles Francis Adams, Bostonian of Bostonians, who frankly wrote, as his last word, that “it is provincial; it tends to stagnate.” As to Poe, I think that the severe respectability of Boston has caused him to be ignored: he was the son of poor players, not Bostonians; and he was a man who sometimes drank too much!

Howells, who knew the city well, has somewhere set down that “Boston would rather perish by fire and sword than to be suspected of vulgarity; a critical, fastidious, reluctant Boston, dissatisfied with the rest of the hemisphere.” But, he might well have added, a brave Boston, a vastly interesting Boston, a Boston that every American should see and know.

Of all my memories of Boston I think that the most fascinating is that of the Christmas Eve observance on Beacon Hill, an affair of extraordinary beauty.

The sun sets on a Beacon Hill immaculately swept and garnished. Every window has been washed until it glistens. Every knocker and doorknob has been polished. And at the windows of almost every house are set rows and rows of candles, along the sills, along the middle sash, in straight lines, in curves, in triangles. Frequently there are as many as twenty candles to a row, or forty to a window, or even more

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

where the rows are banked. Nor are the candles little Christmas-tree things, but the stout, white candles of use, and in some cases there are even the great church-altar candles, and some houses show the rare old silver candlesticks of the past.

Nor is it only the principal windows of a few houses; it is practically every window of almost every house; and some even put candles in the queer Bostonian octagon cupola or lantern that stands upon the very roof above the central halls and stairs.

Shortly after seven o'clock the illumination begins. One by one, window by window, house by house, the lights flare softly up. And such a wonderful illumination as is made! From basement to garret the lights shine softly out into the night.

With the first lighting, visitors have begun to come; not foreign-born visitors, but visitors distinctly American; it is an American observance among these fine old American homes. The people go pacing quietly about on Chestnut Street, Mount Vernon, Pinckney, Cedar and Walnut Streets, and Louisburg Square—and the fine old district is finely aglow, for hundreds of houses are illumined.

Enchanting glimpses may be had into paneled and pilastered rooms, rich in their white and mahogany; glimpses of decorous and beautiful living; glimpses of chairs of stately strength, of sideboards of delectable curves, of family portraits by Stuart or Copley. And every doorknocker has its holly or wreath. Each of these old streets is a soft blaze of candle-light

## “THE NIGHT FILLED WITH MUSIC”

with myriad reciprocating reflections from the lighted windows of one side to the windows opposite; and the soft light brings into newer beauty the curved lines of the house-fronts and the fine old distinguished shapes. The crowds increase; the streets gradually become thronged; all are thrilled with quiet, expectant interest.

And at length comes the distant sound of music, the sound of voices singing an ancient carol of Christmas-time. Nearer and nearer come the singers, caroling as they come, and they pause in front of one of the houses to sing, while all about them are hushed and quiet. Perhaps some of them will carry old-time watchman-lanterns, in their hands or aloft on poles, ancient lanterns of perforated tin with candles burning inside.

On the caroling company slowly goes, and after a while you hear another company come singing, and the people, massing the streets, are all absorbed, earnest, impressed, for it is all so beautiful, this sweet caroling in the candle-lighted streets. In all, in the course of the evening, there are probably four or five different companies, and one group in particular are the singers from the Church of the Advent, at the foot of the Hill, and these generally come later than the others, each group choosing its own hour for starting. When the carolers pause in front of a house a few people are likely to come and stand at the windows; but, if any, it is only a few; no welcoming is expected, no greeting or thanks. The singers do not sing as in any sense

## THE BOOK OF BOSTON

a personal tribute. They carol because it is Christmas. They go about on Beacon Hill because it is Old Boston.

They stop in front of a pair of old houses used as a Protestant Episcopal nunnery; the houses are ablaze with candles, like the other houses all about, and a few Sisters come quietly to the windows, making a positively mediæval scene in this American setting, with their gentle faces within the broad white lines of coiffe and collar, contrasting with the somber black of their robes.

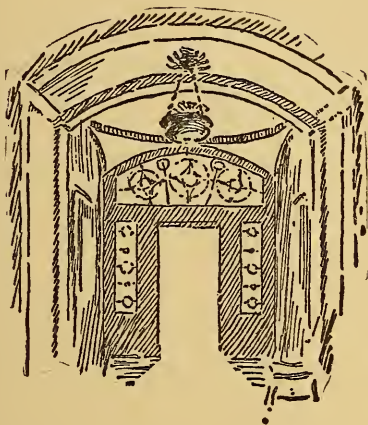
Not all the singers are old nor are all young; they are of varied ages, young men and young women, older men and older women. And most of the carols that are sung are the old-time carols that have come down through the centuries, and one or two are even sung in the old Latin. The last of the singers finish their rounds about ten o'clock and until that time the crowd still lingers. But ten o'clock is late in Boston, for this is an early city; and at ten o'clock one hears the final singing of these fine old tunes, echoing and re-echoing between these fine old-fashioned houses.

The night's candles are almost burned out. Shorter and shorter they have been getting, but none the less bravely have they continued to blaze. And now, house by house, window by window, candle by candle, the lights are extinguished and the streets go gradually to darkness. Almost suddenly, now, they are deserted. Almost suddenly the last of the people have gone. The houses are dark, whole streets are



## “THE NIGHT FILLED WITH MUSIC”

dark. The entire hill is in darkness. The hill is in silence. It all seems like an unreal memory—Christmas Eve in Boston.





## INDEX

### A

Abbey, mural decorations by, 201.  
 Acorn Street, 32.  
 Adams, Abigail, 246, 247.  
 Adams, Charles Francis, 236; his estimate of Boston, 321.  
 Adams, John: birthplace of, 245; at feast at Dorchester, 208; grave of, 248; portrait by Copley, 235; relations with Hancock, 123.  
 Adams, John Quincy: birthplace of, 245; grave of, 248.  
 Alcott, Bronson: characteristics, 46; Emerson's opinion of, 297; homes of, 45, 47, 297.  
 Alcott, Louisa M.: on Boston Common, 18; in Concord, 297; homes of, 45, 47, 49, 297; death of, 47; grave of, 298; "Little Women," 297.  
 Alden, John, 307, 308; home of, in Duxbury, 311, 312.  
 Aldrich, homes of, 40, 42, 44; "Story of a Bad Boy," 44.  
 "America," first sung, 107.  
 Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, 111, 138.  
 André and General Knox, 214.  
 Andros, Lady, funeral of, 109.  
 Appleton, the wit, 107.  
 Arnold Arboretum, 161.  
 Athenæum, the, 101-103.  
 Authors, nomadic, 49.  
 "Autocrat of the Breakfast Table," 59.

### B

Back Bay, 188-194; its extent,

188; its statues, 189; opinion of, by Henry James, 192; with the Fenlands, 202.  
 Bancroft, 145.  
 Beacon Hill, 20-34; Christmas Eve observance on, 321-325; greenery of, 30, 31; houses of, 22, 30, 33, 35-48; steepness of, 20-22; Thackeray and "Esmond," 37.  
 Beacon Street, 24, 37, 191.  
 Beacons in early days, 21.  
 Bellingham Court, 29.  
 Blaxton, the hermit, 63.  
 Bookshops of Boston, 157.  
 Booth, Edwin, 89.  
 Boston Bags, 158.  
 Boston Massacre, 13, 128, 131.  
 Boston Tea Party, 139, 140.  
 Bradford Manuscript, 69, 119-121.  
 Brook Farm, 239-245.  
 Brooks, Phillips, 99.  
 Brown, Alice, home of, 96.  
 Buildings, height of, 146.  
 Bulfinch, 66, 67, 72, 93, 95, 134, 135.  
 Bunker Hill, 180-187; battle watched by Gage, 166; soldiers reviewed for, 229; monument, seen from Charlestown, 180, from Copp's Hill, 171; Webster's oration, 183.  
 Burgoyne, General: his opinion of Bunker Hill, 182, of Lexington, 285; watching Bunker Hill battle, 166.  
 Burying-Grounds: Cambridge, 224; Central, 11-13; Concord, 298; Copp's Hill, 170, 171; King's Chapel, 110, 111, 115; Old Granary, 102-106; Old

# INDEX

South Church, 115; Plymouth, 303, 305; Webster's, 252.

## C

Cambridge, 223-238.  
 Cambridge Elm, 228.  
 Candles, in windows, 321, 322.  
 Carols, on Beacon Hill, 322-324.  
 Cats, in Louisburg Square, 26.  
 Central Burying-Ground, 11-13.  
 Channing, 43, 99.  
 Charles, the, 32, 188, 190.  
 Charles Street, 39, 40, 41.  
 Charles Street Square, 191.  
 Chavannes, mural decorations by, 201.  
*Chesapeake and Shannon*, 279.  
 Chestnut Street, Boston, 24, 50, 51.  
 Chestnut Street, Salem, 276-277.  
 Christmas Eve on Beacon Hill, 321-325.  
 Churches: Hollis Street, 107; King's Chapel, 112-115; at Marblehead, 268; Old North, 164-170; Old South, 115-121; Park Street, 106-108; at Quincy, 248; at Plymouth, 305; Trinity, 202.  
 Cod Fish, the Sacred, 70-71.  
 Columbus and Aristides, statues of, 25.  
 Common, the, 5-19; British soldiers on, 15; cows on, 8; Emerson, 7, 8; trees of, 9; no streets through, 6; the spinning maidens, 17.  
 Commonwealth Avenue, 188-190.  
 Concord, 285, 287, 290-292; the bridge, 291; Concord Fight, relics of, 69; literary associations, 295-299; present aspect of, 294.  
 Copley, portraits by: John Adams, 235; Hancock and Dorothy Q., 78; Thomas Hancock, 235; his frames made by Revere, 174.  
 Copley Square, 200, 202.

Copp's Hill Burying-Ground, 170, 171.

"Coronation," 131.

Cows on the Common, 7, 8.

Cradock homestead, 260.

Craigie, Andrew, 227.

Custom House, the old, 144, 145.

Custom House, the new, 146.

## D

Danvers, 283.

Dedham, 261.

Deland, Mrs., homes of, 42, 43, 49, 192; "Old Chester," 43.

Dickens, and the blind man, 35; liking for Boston, 36; "Martin Chuzzlewit," 38.

Dogs, in Boston, 17, 320.

Dorchester Heights, 208-222.

"Dorothy Q.'s," the, 78, 80, 81, 249, 250.

Downing of Downing Street, 281.

Duxbury, 311.

## E

Emerson: on Boston Common, 7, 8; at Concord, 295, 296; his grave, 298; and Margaret Fuller, 87; "President's messenger," 230.

Enthusiasms, in Boston, 18, 125.  
 "Esmond"; Thackeray's gift to Prescott, 37.

Essex Institute, 281-283.

Evacuation of Boston, 219, 220, 260.

Executions, on Boston Common, 16; in Salem, 275.

## F

Fairbanks homestead, 261.

Family, importance of, in Boston, 194-196.

Faneuil Hall, 133-138; farce given at, 185.

Fenlands, the, 202-204.

Fenway Court, 203.

## INDEX

Fields, James T.: with Dickens, 35; home of, 39; as a host, 41; position in Boston, 40; "The Scarlet Letter," 271; the Wayside Inn, 256.  
 Fish, kinds of, in Boston, 143.  
 Fort Hill Park, 144.  
 Frankland, Sir Henry, 114.  
 Franklin: his birth and baptism, 115, 116; his parents, 103, 116; his portrait in Cambridge, 235.  
 Fuller, Margaret; at Brook Farm, 241, 244; with Emerson, 87.  
 Furniture, Old: on Beacon Hill, 33, 322; in Concord, 299; at Essex Institute, 282; John Hancock's, 73; in Museum of Fine Arts, 203, 204; at Plymouth, 308, 309.

### G

Gallows Hill, 274.  
 Gardner, Mrs., home of, 203.  
 Gerry, Elbridge, homes of, 225, 266.  
 Glass, purple, in windows, 27.  
 Glover, General, 189, 265.  
 Granary Burying-Ground, 102-106.  
 Grant, Robert, home of, 203.

### H

Hale, Edward Everett, 99.  
 Hamilton, Alexander, statue of, 189.  
 Hancock, John, 73-83; his clothes, 76, 77; his cows on the Common, 8; the "empty barrel," 123; furniture of, 73; home of, 73; marriage of, 80; portrait of, 78; grave of, 103; his pasture for the State House, 72; where he proposed, 250; his widow, 74; relations with Washington, 123.  
 Hancock, Thomas, portrait of, by Copley, 235.

Harding, Chester, 101, 236.  
 Harvard, John, statue of, 231.  
 Harvard University, 223, 230-238; School of Medicine, 205.  
 Hawthorne: in Boston, 145; at Brook Farm, 239-243; at Concord, 295, 296, 297; his marriage note, 45; grave of, 298; "House of the Seven Gables," 272, 273; in Salem, 269-270, 273, 274; "Scarlet Letter," 271; original of Hester Prynne, 111; visited by Worcester, 270.  
 Holmes: birthplace of, 229; homes of, 41, 49, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 191; grave of, 224; the "Long Path," 11; the "Autocrat," 59; "Old Ironsides," 179; his importance to Boston, 55; at King's Chapel, 115; teacher of anatomy, 55-57; "boring" through narrow streets, 150; poems about lectures, 198; wit of, 57, 100, 104.  
 Hooper, "King," home of, 264.  
 Houdon; his Washington, 102.  
 "House of the Seven Gables," 272, 273.  
 Howe, Julia Ward: home of, 50; meeting with Henry James, 50.  
 Howells: his estimate of Boston, 321; feelings, approaching Boston, 319; home of, 47.  
 Huntington Avenue, 200.

### I

"Ichabod," 250.  
 India Wharf, 140-141.  
 Ironwork, Old, 33, 37, 52, 59, 67.  
 Italians in Boston, 163, 164, 168, 172.

### J

James, Henry: the Back Bay, 192; Julia Ward Howe, 50; Mount Vernon Street, 23.  
 Julien, and his soup, 11.



# INDEX

## K

Keayne, Robert, 111, 137, 138.  
King Philip, 306.  
King's Chapel, 112-115.  
King's Chapel Burying-Ground, 110-111, 115.  
Knox, General: bookshop of, 126, 212; getting cannon for Dorchester Heights, 212-217; his cannon in Cambridge, 228; meeting André, 214; portrait of, 221.

## L

Lafayette: at Bunker Hill celebration, 184; greeting Hancock's widow, 74.  
Lectures, in Boston, 197-198, 206.  
Lee mansion, 262-264.  
Lexington, 285, 287-289.  
Lexington and Concord, road between, 285, 289, 290.  
Libraries: Athenæum, 101-103; Boston Public, 200-202; Emerson's, 296; Widener Memorial, 232-234; Washington's, 102.  
Lind, Jenny, 25, 253.  
"Little Women," 297.  
"Long Path," the, 11.  
Longfellow: home of, 226; grave of, 224; with Browning, 226; "Reef of Norman's Woe," 256; the Wayside Inn and its characters, 47, 48, 255, 256.  
Louisburg Square, 24-26, 33, 47, 63, 322.  
Lowell, James Russell, 102, 224, 225.  
Lowell Lectures, 198.

## M

Mall, Beacon Street, 16.  
Marblehead, 262-268.  
Marshfield, 250.  
Massachusetts Hall, 232.

*Mayflower*, the: babies of the 309; grave of first woman who landed from, 110; "Log" of, 119.

Medford, 257, 260.

Memorial Hall, 234-236.

Monuments: Banks and Devens, 101; Boston Massacre, 13; Phillips Brooks, 99; Bunker Hill, 183, 186; Channing, 99; Dorchester Heights, 220; Ether, 100; Glover, 189; Hale, 99; Hamilton, 189; John Harvard, 231; Hooker, 100; Lexington, 288; Louisburg Square, 25; Prescott, 186; Provincetown, 317; Shaw, 13; Soldiers and Sailors', 14; Standish, 309; Washington, 189.

Moth, the gypsy, 225.

Motley, 50, 224.

Mt. Auburn Cemetery, 224.

Mt. Vernon Street, 23, 24, 32, 54, 322.

Museum of Fine Arts, 203, 204; Stuart portraits in, 221.

Music, in Boston, 198-200.

Musicians, street, 33.

## N

Navy Yard, Charlestown, 177-180.

North Church, Old, 164-170.

North Square, 172.

## O

Old Granary Burying-Ground, 102-106.

"Old Ironsides," 176, 178, 179.

Old Manse, 295.

Old North Church, 164-170.

Old South Church, 115-121.

## P

Parkman, 51, 224.

Park Street Church, 106-108.

# INDEX

Parkways, 160-162.  
 Parsons, Thomas, 48.  
 Percy, Lord: at Dorchester, 218;  
   at Lexington, 285, 286, 292,  
   293; portrait of, 293.  
 Pickering, Timothy, home of,  
   278.  
 Pigeons, on the Common, 16.  
 Pinckney Street, 32, 44, 45, 46,  
   322.  
 Pitcairn, Major, 104, 166, 287,  
   288, 290.  
 Plymouth, 300-311; Emerson's  
   wedding trip from, 296.  
 Plymouth Rock, 302.  
 Poe: birthplace of, 321; attitude  
   of Boston toward, 320; his  
   estimate of Boston, 321.  
 Portuguese at Provincetown,  
   316.  
 Post-Office, 148.  
 Prescott, General, monument to,  
   186.  
 Prescott, the historian, home of,  
   37.  
 Priscilla and John Alden, 307,  
   308, 311-313.  
 Provincetown, 313-318.  
 Putnam homestead, 283, 284.

## Q

Quincy homestead, 248-250.  
 Quincy Market, 137.  
 Quincy, town of, 245, 248.

## R

Radcliffe College, 223.  
 "Reef of Norman's Woe," 256.  
 Restaurants, 86, 157.  
 Revere Beach, 161.  
 Revere, Paul: character and  
   achievements, 172-176; copper  
   for State House, 66; as a den-  
   tist, 174; home of, 172; grave  
   of, 103; his lanterns, 169, 170;  
   at Lexington, 287; his prints,  
   131; his midnight ride, 169-  
   170; his silversmithing, 131,  
   173, 204.

Riedesel, Baroness, 21, 266.  
 Royall house, 257-260.

## S

Salem, 269-284.  
 Salem Street, 163, 168.  
 "Scarlet Letter," 111, 271, 272,  
   273.  
 Shaw Memorial, 13.  
 Silver, Old: at Museum of Fine  
   Arts, 204; of the Old North  
   Church, 167; made by Paul  
   Revere, 131, 173, 204.  
 Sleepy Hollow Cemetery, 298.  
 Social life in Boston; opinion of  
   Charles Francis Adams, 236.  
*Somerset*, the: at Boston, 169;  
   guns from, 175; existent wreck  
   of, 313.  
 Spinning Maidens, 17.  
 Standish, Miles, 309-311; hasty  
   courtship of, 308; his sword,  
   309; site of home, 310.  
 Stark, "Molly," 259, 260.  
 State House, New, 9, 20, 62;  
   Bulfinch front, 66; interior,  
   67-72.  
 State House, Old, 126-132.  
 Steepness of Beacon Hill, 20, 22.  
 Street cries, old, 151, 152.  
 Street signs, 154, 155.  
 Streets: names, in Back Bay,  
   192; complexity and narrow-  
   ness of, 149, 150; names  
   changed, 122, 124; pavements  
   of, 150, 151.  
 Stuart, Gilbert: home of, 144;  
   grave of, 12, 13; Chester  
   Harding, 101; his portraits on  
   Beacon Hill, 53, of Knox, 221,  
   of Washington, 12, 135, 137.  
 Students' Quarter, 204, 205.  
 Sunday laws, 82, 84.  
 Sunday observance, 85, 87.  
 Surriage, Agnes, 114.

## T

Tablets: Boston Tea Party, 139;

# INDEX

- British retreat, 293; British soldiers, 294; Channing, 43; Hancock, 76, 79; Holmes, 55; Lexington, 288; Old North Church, 169; Old South Church, 115; Pitcairn, 166; Plymouth, 304, 305; Gilbert Stuart, 13.
- Thackeray: sailing for Boston, 319; with "Esmond" on Beacon Hill, 37; eating American oysters, 36; going to lecture, 35; inspiration for "Virginians," 38.
- Theaters: locations, 87, 88; no Saturday night performances, 87, 89; the Boston Theater, 88, 89, 90.
- Thoreau, 297, 298; visiting Hawthorne, 296.
- Ticknor, George, home of, 52.
- Trees, on Boston Common, 9; at Plymouth, 304, 305; at Salem, 277.
- Trinity Church, 202.
- V
- Views: of the Back Bay, 193; of Bunker Hill Monument, 171; of the Charles, 32; of the Granary Burying-Ground, 105; of the State House, 9; from the State House, 62.
- "Virginians, The"; Boston inspiration for, 38.
- W
- Wadsworth house, 229.
- Wapping Street, 177.
- Warren, General, 114, 118, 174.
- Washington: visit to Boston in 1756, 217; in 1789, 122; in British farce, 185; opinion of Bunker Hill, 182; in Cambridge, 227; taking command, 228; at Dorchester Heights, 208-222; relations with Hancock, 123; at King's Chapel, 113; his library, 102; at Marblehead, 265; married by clergyman from Marblehead, 268; portraits of, 12, 135-137, 235; acquaintance with Paul Revere, 175; first statue of, 167; Houdon's statue, 102; equestrian statue, 189.
- Washington Street, 122, 124, 125.
- Wayside Inn, 47, 48, 255, 256.
- Weather, of Boston, 158, 159; winter observances, 153.
- Webster: Bunker Hill oration, 183; Jenny Lind concert, 253; "Ichabod," 250; home of, 250, 251; death of, 252; grave of, 252.
- Wellesley College, 161.
- West Cedar Street, 47.
- Weston, beautiful road to, 160.
- Wharves, 140-144.
- Whittier: "Ichabod," 250; "Skipper Ireson's Ride," 266.
- Widener Memorial Library, 232-234.
- Winstanley, 135-137.
- Women, importance of, in Boston, 90-92; in telephone directory, 96.
- Women's City Club, 93.
- Wyman of Woburn, 286.



BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY



**3 9999 06664 985 4**





